NEWS / A2

GMA Sona to focus on decentralizing funds to LGUs in 'super regions'

WWW.INQ7.NET

See complete list of 17,821 nurses who passed board exams

NEWS / A10

Phivolcs fears explosive eruption; 35 evacuation centers prepared

WORLD / A27

Over 330 dead in Indon tsunami, 160 missing

Davao broadcaster killed; the 8th this year

By Eldie S. Aguirre
PDI Mindanao Bureau

DIGOS CITY, DAVAO DEL SUR—FIFTEEN MINUTES after he signed off the air, radio commentator Armando Pace got on his motorcycle and sped away. He didn't know he would never reach his destination and that he had made his last broadcast.

As the hard-hitting broadcaster, popularly

DAVAO/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Wednesday, July 19, 2006 ★★ 5 sections / Vol. 21 / No. 221 P18 website: www.inq7.net

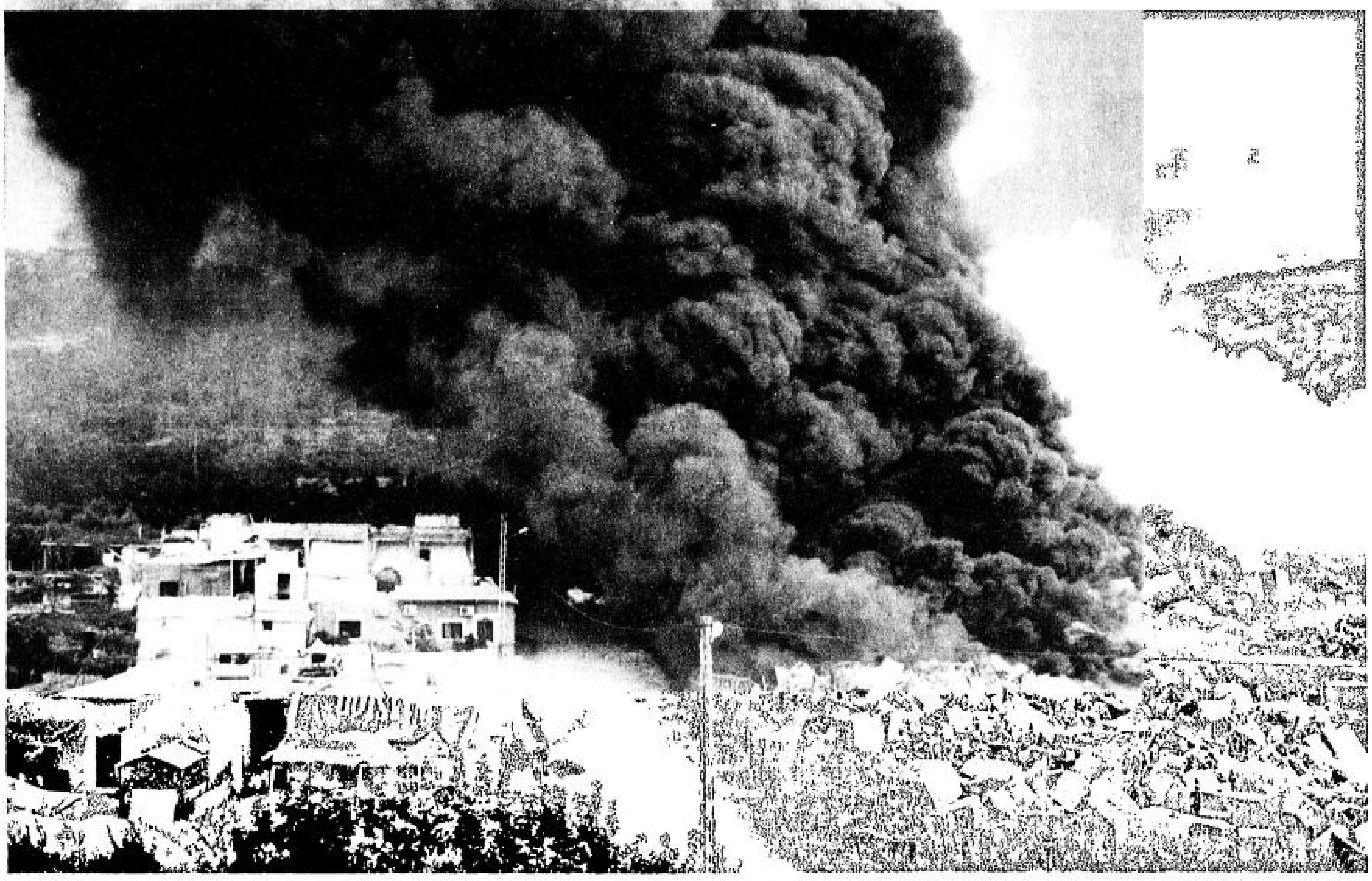
Bush expletive caught by mike at G-8 summit

ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA—A microphone picked up an unaware US President George W. Bush saying on Monday that Syria should press Hezbollah guerrillas "to stop doing this shit" as he and British Prime Minister Tony

HULING-HULI KA! DON'T SAY BAD WORDS!

BUSH/ A21

OFWs: Nowhere to run



TRAIL OF DEVASTATION: Many parts of Lebanon, particularly in the suburbs of the capital city Beirut, are in various states of devastation as Israel continues its all-out offensive on its northern neighbor. This explosion near Beirut was reported by Lebanon TV as an Israeli military aircraft that was shot down. But Israeli military claimed no such thing happened even as it had not ruled out a massive ground assault to crush the Hezbollah militia. AP

Insufficient resources delay exodus

By Nikko Dizon

AS TENS OF THOUSANDS of foreigners were fleeing the Israeli bombardment of Lebanon in one of the biggest mass evacuations since World War II, thousands of Filipinos yesterday remained trapped in the country, their embassy increasingly isolated after cellular phone networks were knocked out during bombing raids.

The Israeli air strikes (*Story in The World, Page A28*), which have killed more than 200 people, left the Philippine Embassy with only three landlines, a fax line and satellite phone working. Officials appealed to families of the stranded Filipinos to stop bombarding the embassy with calls so the lines could be used for more urgent communication.

Hotlines to call:

A 24-hour operations center in Pasay City will entertain questions from OFWs and their families. The center's hotline numbers are **833-6992, 551-1560** and **0917-898-6992**).

The Philippine Association of Mediterranean Agencies Deploying Labours (Pamadel) has also opened its own hotline: **522-4416**

One diplomat showed a touch of humor in the bleak situation. Asked what would happen if the landlines ceased working, he said: "Then, we'll kneel and pray and communicate with God."

OFWs: NOWHERE/ A21

Palace: We'll go same old merry way with bishops

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

DESPITE THE BROUHAHA OVER MALAcañang's alleged wining, dining and bribing of bishops, Palace officials say they will not think twice about going on with their merry old ways.

"I don't think there is anything to be defensive about the situation," said Special Adviser on Political Affairs Gabriel Claudio in reply to an INQUIRER text message on the prelates' concerns about the propriety of giving favors to members of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines as

PALACE/ A8

DNA in panties, condom matches Nicole's, says expert

By Tarra V. Quismundo

A FORENSIC ANALYST FROM THE Philippine National Police yesterday took the stand and disclosed in court for the first time that DNA was present in two pieces of evidence that prosecutors deemed crucial in pursuing the rape case filed by a Filipino woman against four US Marines.

Dr. Francisco Supe Jr., chief of the PNP Crime Laboratory's DNA Analysis Section, told Makati Judge Benjamin Pozon's court that the DNA of complainant "Nicole" was found in samples of "biological fluid" found on the panties she was wearing on the night of Nov. 1, 2005, and in the condom purportedly used by accused Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith in committing the alleged rape.

DNA (deoxyribonucleic acid) is a ma-

DNA IN PANTIES/ A21

Lim tells court: No water, no light

By Armand N. Nocum

BRIG. GEN. DANILO LIM YESTERDAY asked the Court of Appeals to order his release, calling his detention illegal and saying that no formal charges had been brought against him in connection with an alleged plot to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo in February.

The sacked commander of the elite First Scout Rangers Regiment also said that the Army's maximum security center in Tanay, Rizal, where he was brought on July 11 lacked basic amenities.

"The facility itself is really not prepared to accommodate detainees. No water, no light, no facilities. Even the guards themselves have been telling me that they were not prepared to receive us. They were told that they were going to receive us on that same day," Lim said.

Lim's lawyer, Vicente Verdadero, told the appellate court's 16th Division under Associate Justice Fernanda Lampas Peralta that under the Articles of War, he

LIM TELLS COURT/ A8

One of best-armed PNP units may be in Isabela

VILLAMOR VISAYA JR. NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

ARMED TO THE TEETH: The Santiago City police in Isabela during a drill demonstrate the high-powered guns worth P2.8M, including 20 AK-47 assault rifles, donated by the city government led by Mayor Amelita Navarro.

By Villamor Visaya Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

SANTIAGO CITY—WITH THEIR LATEST ACQUIsition of at least 96 high-powered firearms, including 20 AK-47 assault rifles, the 135-strong city police force may be one of the best armed law enforcement units in the country today.

The guns, worth P2.8 million, were purchased and donated to the police force by the city government, led by Mayor Amelita Navarro, amid charges by her political rivals that the transactions were "railroaded" in a special session of the city council.

In Quezon City, Camp Crame officials welcomed the donation yesterday but quickly added that their arsenal did not include the AK-47, an assault rifle created by Russian Mikhail Kalashnikov in the 1940s and the favorite weapon of the communists in the Vietnam War.

"We do not issue AK-47s. We do not have bullets for AK-47s [in storage]. That's the problem," said Chief Supt. Prudencio Regis, deputy chief of the

ONE OF/ A8

Lacson: Bolante may have misused US food aid

By Philip C. Tubeza
and Leila B. Salaverria

THE AMERICAN GOVERNMENT MAY be holding on to Jocelyn "Joc-joc" Bolante because US funds were part of the P728 million used in the fertilizer fund scam, Sen. Panfilo Lacson claimed yesterday.

Lacson said he had received information that the former agriculture undersecretary might be indicted for a federal offense for misappropriating US financial aid to Philippine agriculture.

The senator also raised the possibility that ranking administration officials, both elected and appointed, would be facing charges before a US federal grand jury.

"It seems that part of the P728 million that Joc-joc misappropriated came from the US agricultural aid program to the Philippines. So he may be indicted for a federal offense along with his cohorts in the country, which could include his principal," Lacson said.

"We may have a situation where some very high elective and appointive officials in our government might face a US grand jury for corruption and fraud," he said.

A source knowledgeable of the fertilizer fund scam said the US government had released around $10 million in official development assistance (ODA) funds for Philippine agriculture programs.

"The US government has a lot of exposure in the Philippines. One of the biggest exposures is supporting agricultural programs," said the source, who asked not to be named because of the sensitive nature of the subject.

"[As much as] $10 million has been

LACSON/ A23

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon and Visayas will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms becoming frequent rains which may trigger flashfloods and landslides over Central and Southern Luzon and Eastern Visayas. The rest of the country will have cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

COMPILED BY: KATE V. PEDROSO, PDI RESEARCH/07/18/06 SOURCE PAGASA

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Partly Cloudy

Sona: Funds for 'super regions'

By Leila B. Salaverria and DJ Yap

ONE OF THE ISSUES THAT PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo will focus on in her State of the Nation Address on July 24 will the decentralization of funds for the development of the country's planned "super regions," according to a Malacañang official.

"The President is going to be concentrating on decentralizing a lot of funds," Arthur Yap, chief of the Presidential Management Staff chief and presidential adviser on job creation, told the Bulong Pulungan forum yesterday.

Yap said there were enough funds from revenue collections and earnings for Malacañang to put in more investments into the development of the so-called "super regions."

The President last week identified four regions to be turned into investment and development areas—North Luzon (to include the Ilocos and Cagayan Valley regions and the Cordillera Administrative Region, including the provinces of Aurora and Nueva Ecija), Metro Luzon (Central Luzon and Calabarzon regions and Metro Manila), Central Philippines (Mimaropa, Bicol, Western Visayas and Eastern Visayas) and Mindanao (the Zamboanga Peninsula, Northern Mindanao, Davao, Socsargen and the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao).

Yap yesterday indicated the likely development focus of each region—Mindanao and Northern Luzon for agriculture, Central Philippines for tourism, Central Luzon, Mimaropa and the Bicol regions for major infrastructure.

"You'll see the Sona concentrate on that," he said.

Yap said transferring national funds to the so-called super regions would generate employment and investment in these areas and thus jump-start development there.

"When you bring down more funds to super regions, you actually capacitate [sic] them to do more local projects critical to them. That creates jobs in the local level and that is a signal to the private sector to invest," said Yap.

He said job generation has always been the focus of the President's state of the nation addresses.

Yap said he hoped the President's Sona would be received well and heeded.

He said he hoped "it can be taken as, [and] seriously accepted as marching orders on where we intend to go."

He said "things are really looking up," noting that the economy grew in the first quarter, revenue collections were up, the peso was stable and unemployment had slightly gone down, among other indicators.

But groups opposed to the President believe they already know what she will say in the Sona.

"She won't be crowing about the accomplishment of her past Sona promises. Instead, she'll focus on the supposed destabilization attempts against her," said Wilson Fortaleza, spokesperson of the Laban ng Masa.

"In the past, she used to talk about how she improved the economy, or how she delivered on her promises. But now her being an economist won't work anymore, she won't have anything to be proud of," Fortaleza told a press conference called by Laban ng Masa, the Freedom from Debt Coalition and Sulong.

Looking silly

He said Ms Arroyo would likely talk about crushing the communist insurgency in keeping with the "all-out war" she recently declared against the communists.

"She'll also talk about the involvement of the opposition and all the critics of her administration," he added.

Militants said the President would "only look silly" if she were to paint a rosy picture of the economy, citing the many supposed negative indicators.

Fortaleza said the value-added tax on oil and power has "harshly [affected] the lives of the people."

"Under the administration of Ms Arroyo, the cost of power has almost doubled to P9 per kilowatt hour from P5 per kilowatt hour before she signed the Electric Power Industry Reform Act into law in 2001," said FDC president Ana Maria Nemenzo.

The FDC said power rates in the Philippines are the second highest in Asia. The country also has the third highest industrial electricity rates and seventh highest household power rates in the world, it said.

As a prelude to the protest marches during the Sona, the FDC, Laban ng Masa and Sulong will hold a day of protest against the VAT on oil and power on July 20.

Metro on high alert for GMA address

By Luige A. del Puerto, Jocelyn R. Uy and Norman Bordadora

POLICE PLACED METRO MANILA ON HIGH alert yesterday amid intelligence reports that communist rebels would stage grenade attacks during President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address to Congress next week.

Vidal Querol, the National Capital Region police director, said the Philippine National Police had information that New People's Army rebels would infiltrate planned anti-Arroyo protest marches during the Sona on July 24 and foment violence.

The high alert means all police forces in the capital will be refused leave and will be in precincts at all times.

Querol said a certain "Ka Angie," an alleged NPA leader in Mindoro, would be leading a small group that would try to slip into Metro Manila for the Sona.

'Monitoring points'

He said police have set up "monitoring points" in Batangas province to intercept the group which threatens "to lob grenades into the ranks of ralliers in case of dispersal."

He pointed out that explosives were seized by the police from a group of protesters in Northern Luzon during last year's Sona.

"I'm very much concerned because [the report] is very specific," Querol said.

"The information that we have just received is that they will come from Mindoro and land in Batangas, and from there, it would be easy to proceed to Metro Manila," he said

Querol said there were as yet no indication that the NPA special operations group had reached the capital.

Militants have dismissed the report as part of government psy-war operations to cow people into staying home rather than joining the street protests.

The Bagong Alyansang Makabayan said it was hoping to mobilize at least 10,000 people for the Sona protests.

Querol said check points had been set up around the capital to guard critical sites such as petrol depots, power, water and communications facilities and bus and train stations.

About 13,000 police officers and 1,000 soldiers would be fielded around the Batasan Pambansa complex, Malacañang and several Army and police camps, he said.

Some security officials claimed the threats had been reduced by the arrest of six fugitive officers of the Magdalo group this month in a raid near the Congress building. But Querol said he did not want police to be caught flat-footed if something happened.

Police said they were expecting rogue soldiers and NPA rebels to take action after the government moved against some politicians, diplomats, soldiers, business leaders, bishops and priests.

Three prominent businessmen, linked to a failed plan to seize power in February, were summoned for questioning this week by the National Bureau of Investigation on suspicion they funded the moves against Ms Arroyo.

Bayan said it was granted a permit by the Quezon City government to march from the University of the Philippines to the Ever Gotesco mall on Commonwealth Ave. on July 24.

"It appears that the rally site is being pushed farther and farther from the Batasang Pambansa," said Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes.

Militants not allowed

Militants fear that they will be barred from going to the rally site, even if the demonstration itself would be let alone, he said.

"The psy-war operatives of the PNP and AFP are working overtime to fabricate new conspiracies and plots that may be used as a basis to cancel the permits," Reyes said.

"And like the previous rallies, the PNP might block vehicles or prevent people from leaving their schools and communities to get to Commonwealth," he said.

He said police blockades and "other forms of harassment" have been a perennial problem for militants from the Southern Tagalog and Central Luzon regions trying to get into Metro Manila.

Querol said protesters from the countryside would simply be checked and allowed to proceed "within a reasonable time."

The police director said large protest actions and demonstrations by groups coming from a wide spectrum of independent and cause-oriented groups, including party-list groups, were traditionally expected during the Sona.

Arroyo back with Libyan package

PRESIDENT MACAPAGAL-Arroyo last night announced a package of goodies she got from her state visit to Libya, which included clinching high-paying jobs there for Filipinos.

At her Cabinet meeting shortly upon arriving from Libya, the President told her Cabinet members that she was able to secure a bilateral agreement from Tripoli that would benefit health care workers and construction workers.

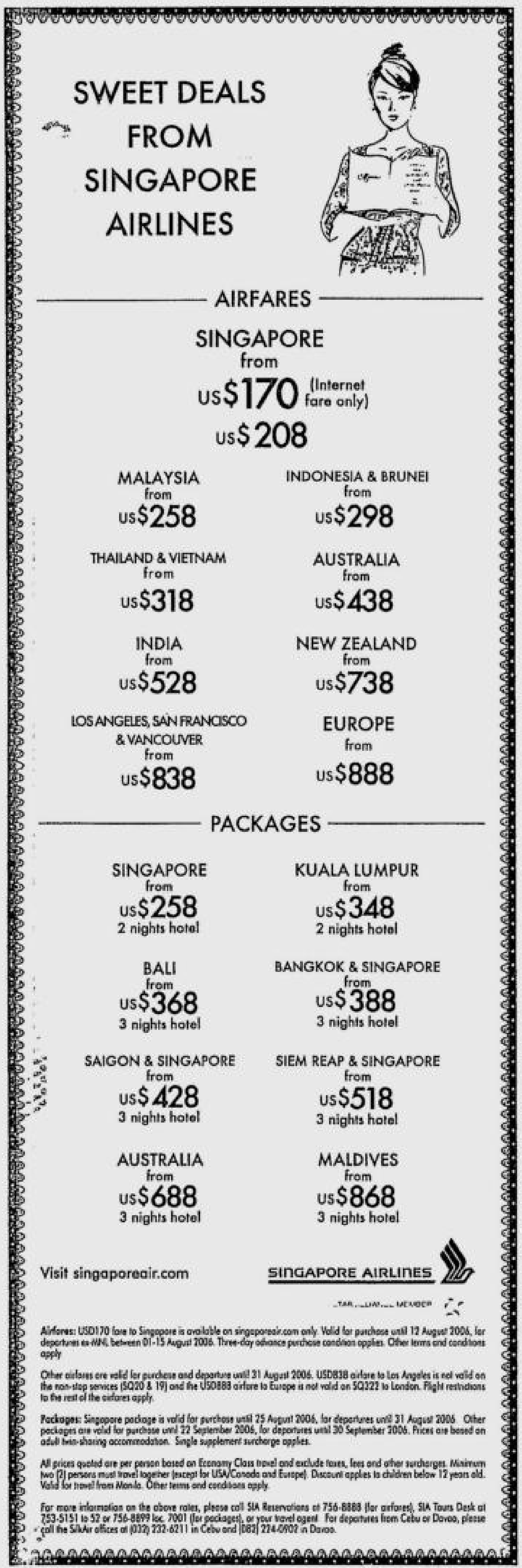
"The minister of labor will give the requirements in August," President Arroyo said.

She also disclosed that the Bank of Libya was financing P40 billion worth of construction projects over which Filipinos will have priority.

The President said that she was also able to get a provision "where Libya and the Philippines will jointly work to protect the welfare of Filipino workers there."

There are 7,000 Filipinos working in Libya.

President Arroyo and her party arrived at 6:45 p.m. last night after a two-day state visit to Libya, where she held among others a meeting with Libyan leader Col. Moammar Gadhafi. *Christine O. Avendaño*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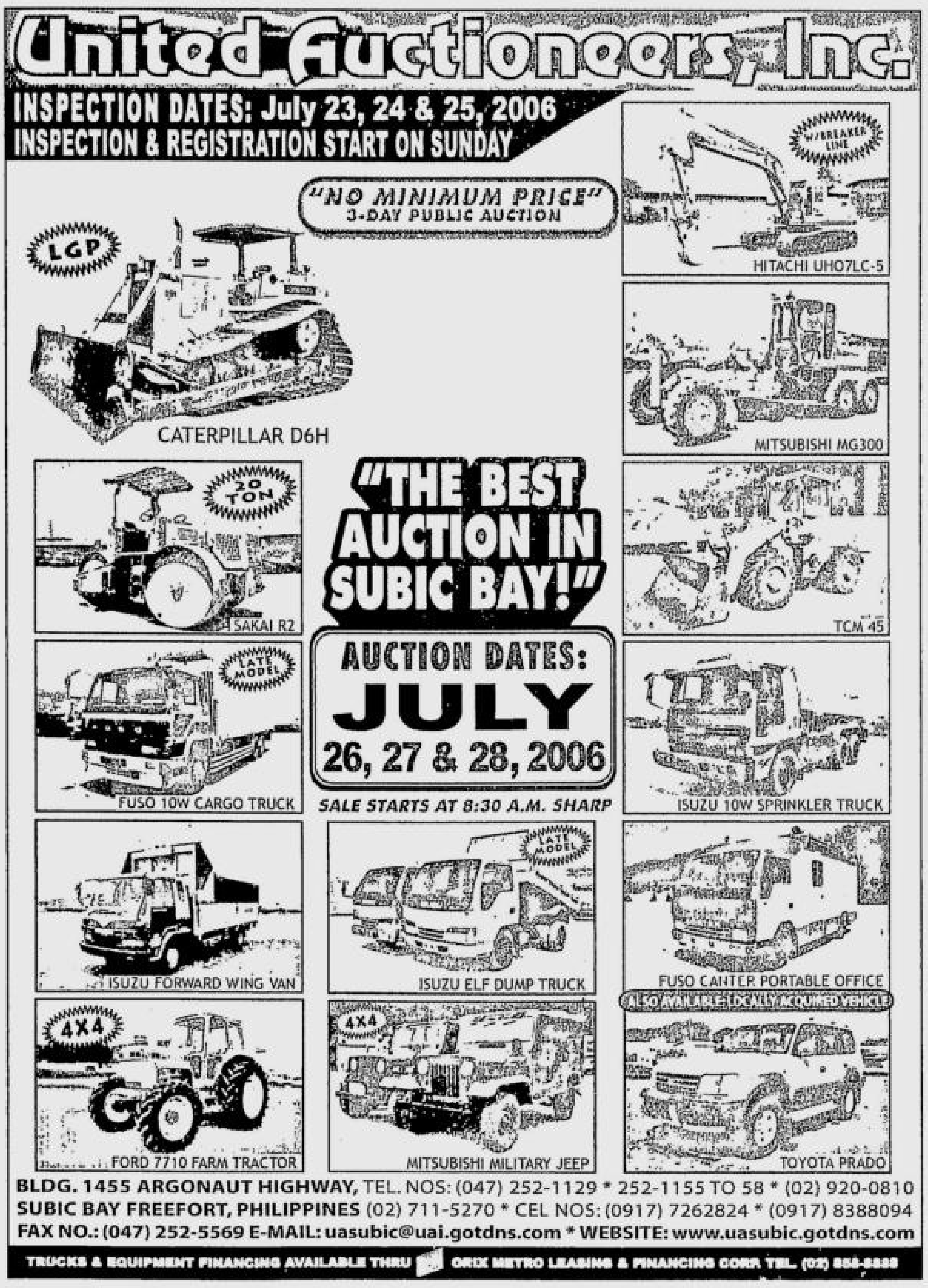
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But why is Bill Luz still here? Nene asks

By Philip C. Tubeza

SENATE MINORITY LEADER Aquilino Pimentel Jr. yesterday welcomed the resignation of businessman Guillermo Luz as secretary general of the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) but asked why he had not been deported yet.

A few months ago, Pimentel had questioned Luz's involvement in Namfrel and accused him of being a Canadian citizen.

This time, the senator said Luz's resignation was a "good move."

"There is such a thing as being burnt out in the task that one is doing no matter how good his intentions are," Pimentel said in a statement.

Luz tendered his resignation as early as Jan. 17 this year but Namfrel chair Jose Concepcion Jr. accepted it only last month.

Pimentel said he was making an inquiry about "the move to deport Luz for engaging in political activities despite his being a Canadian citizen."

"In the meantime, the people are entitled to know what has happened to the move to deport Luz for getting involved in the electoral activities of the nation even as he is an alien," he added.

Pimentel also said that Concepcion should resign from his post in Namfrel.

"With this move, perhaps, Jose Concepcion will follow suit. I know how difficult it is to let go of one's baby. But Namfrel has outgrown Joe-Con's fatherhood. I am sure there are other good people in Namfrel who can take over," he said.

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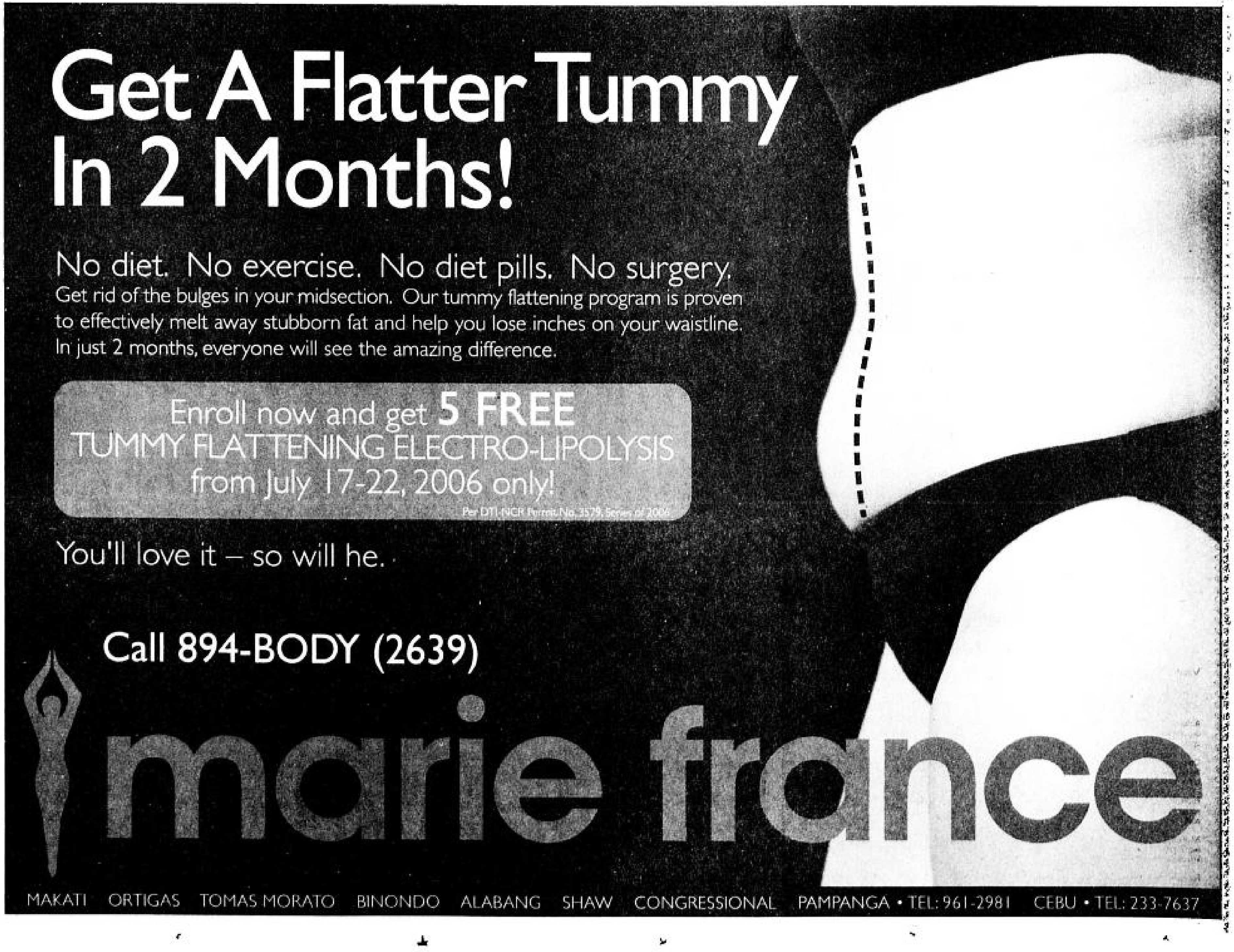

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2 religious leaders vouch for Tonyboy

TWO RELIGIOUS LEADERS—EL SHADAI'S Bro. Mike Velarde and Radio Veritas president Fr. Anton C.T. Pascual—threw their support behind businessman Antonio "Tonyboy" O. Cojuangco against allegations he was one of the supporters and financiers of a recent destabilization attempt against the government.

Velarde, the head of the charismatic Catholic movement, said in a radio interview over Radio Veritas, said he was sad that the good name of a respected businessman has been dragged into politics.

"I know Tonyboy Cojuangco personally and the one linking him to destabilization has not personally talked with Cojuangco," Velarde said. "Dragging names of business leaders into politics of destabilization is not doing our country any good."

Cojuangco was recently implicated in the production of the tape wherein Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim of the Army Scout Rangers was seen and heard to have withdrawn his support from Pres. Macapagal-Arroyo in the foiled Feb. 24 coup attempt.

Pascual, in a statement said, "the least that we need is another round of random finger-pointing and accusations against people, especially notable captains of industry, who have, for the longest time helped steer the economic ship of this country to safe shores."

Pascual said "the recent accusations leveled against businessman Tonyboy Cojuangco, for alleged involvement in the February coup is a huge step backward."

He urged "people in authority to be more circumspect in pointing accusing fingers at people who have contributed a lot not only to the country's economic well-being but also to nation-building in general."

Ombudsman probe violates Constitution, says lawyer

By Nelson F. Flores and Leila B. Salaverria

THE OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN would be violating the Constitution if it persists in investigating impeachable officials like the commissioners of the Commission on Elections, according to the lawyer of the Comelec commissioner found liable for the controversial P1.3-million Mega Pacific poll modernization contract.

Subjecting constitutional officers like his client, Comelec Commissioner Resurreccion Borra, to interrogation by a fiscal or by a prosecuting officer of the Ombudsman's Office, would be tantamount to subjecting the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court or, worse, the President of the Republic, to the same process, said lawyer Gabriel Villareal.

"Chairman Benjamin Abalos Sr. and the rest of the Comelec commissioners would be doing their office and our people a great disservice if they submit themselves to a probe by an investigating body which clearly and by its own admission has no authority over impeachable officials," said Villareal in a motion filed with the Ombudsman.

Villareal said the Supreme Court itself has stated that constitutional officers cannot be investigated or prosecuted by any other method except impeachment, not because they are immune from criminal liability, "but due to the fact that there is a procedural requirement under the Constitution that must be followed."

Same procedure

The same procedure applies to members of the constitutional offices like the Comelec, he said.

He said the high court made it clear in*Lecaroz vs Sandiganbayan* and *Cuenco vs Fernan* that Section 2, Article XIII of the Constitution bars the removal from office of constitutional officers by any method other than impeachment.

He cited another SC ruling, *Cuenco vs Fernan*, seeking the disbarment of then Chief Justice Marcelo Fernan, that stressed that the removal from office of members of the high court "can be effected only through impeachment, and not indirectly through disbarment proceedings."

Villareal explained that the Constitution withheld the power to investigate impeachable officials from the Ombudsman to shield the incumbents of constitutional offices from pressure from vested interests and harassment suits so that they can perform unhampered the constitutional mandate of their office.

ABALOS

"Submitting themselves to the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman despite the clear want or absence of authority, popular as it may seem in the near term, is setting a wrong precedent that will certainly undermine their office as well as the Comelec as an institution," he argued.

"The Ombudsman cannot undertake the task of even investigating Comelec officials prior to any impeachment proceeding, because this power rests solely with the House of Representatives," Villareal said.

He noted that the powers granted by the Constitution to the Office of the Ombudsman "significantly excluded and withheld" the authority to recommend impeachment.

The Ombudsman has summoned 11 poll officials, including Abalos and Borra, in connection with its investigation into the P1.3-billion contract awarded by the Comelec to the Mega Pacific consortium for the automated counting of the 2004 vote.

Factual Findings

The high court nullified the contract on Jan. 13, 2004, and ordered the Ombudsman in May to determine who should be held accountable for the aborted deal.

In an initial report earlier this month, the Ombudsman said there were "factual findings" that the House of Representatives could use in an impeachment action against Borra. The Ombudsman also recommended further investigation of Abalos, commissioners Mehol Sadain and Florentino Tuason, retired commissioners Luzviminda Tancangco and Ralph Lantion.

Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez also recommended the filing of charges against Eduardo Mejos, the chair of the Comelec bids and awards committee, and committee members Jose Balbuena Jr., Lamberto Llamas, Bartolome Sinocruz and Gideon de Guzman.

Villareal said Gutierrez's decision to recommend the impeachment Borra and the investigation of the other Comelec officials violated due process because she herself admitted that the process was still incomplete when she cited the need "to conduct a more exhaustive investigation."

"There can be no clearer case of violation of due process. We cannot discount the possibility that the conduct of a more exhaustive investigation before the decision was issued could have yielded evidence and conclusions favorable to the respondents," Villareal said.

Willing to present evidence

Meanwhile, Comelec chair Benjamin Abalos yesterday said he was willing to present evidence to show that the agency did nothing wrong in approving the P1.3 billion contract, but not before the Office of the Ombudsman.

Abalos said the proper forum for the Comelec to present evidence to explain and defend itself would be the House of Representatives.

While he respects the Ombudsman's Office, Abalos said he did not recognize its jurisdiction over constitutional officials like Comelec commissioners, which was the reason why he did not appear at a hearing on the issue set by the Ombudsman last week.

"I'm willing to present evidence because we want to clear ourselves of charges, [but] the proper venue is the House of Representatives. We have to be impeached first like the President," Abalos told the Kapihan sa Maynila at the Manila Hotel.

He said that if it were only up to him, he would have appeared before the Ombudsman to explain the Comelec's side. However, he could not do so because the Comelec's position is that the Ombudsman has no jurisdiction over impeachable officials.

'Fair and square'

But Abalos maintained that there was nothing irregular in the contract's approval. He said Mega Pacific got the deal "fair and square," pointing out that none of the losing bidders had complained about the process.

He said he was hoping the Comelec would still be able to use the counting machines it got from Mega Pacific, but Congress would have to pass a law giving the Comelec the authority to use whatever technology it deems appropriate for elections.

The automated counting machines have been stored in a warehouse and are being maintained by the Comelec despite the SC's voiding of the contract.

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Corrections

IN THE JULY 18 ISSUE, labels were mistakenly interchanged in the inset, "Possible escape routes," of the front-page infographics, "Flash Points in Israeli-Lebanese Conflict." The label, "From north of Lebanon to Syria, by land," should have been labeled, "From Beirut to Cyprus, 5-6 hours by sea," and vice versa.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, the front-page banner story—"OFWs in Beirut flee to churches"—misstated the capital of Israel. The country's capital is Jerusalem—not Tel Aviv.

* * *

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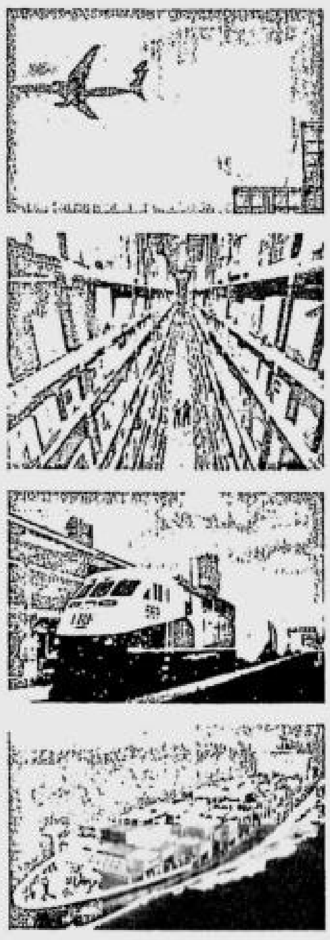

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Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez said the BI had set up a one-stop action center at its Intramuros office to ensure resident foreigners that applications would be speedily processed.

"The center assures convenience because documentary requirements are evaluated and recommended for approval on the spot by assigned registration officers," Fernandez said.

Fernandez added that an applicant who was due to leave the country could secure his ACR I-Card within the same day provided that a photocopy of the plane ticket was attached to the I-Card application.

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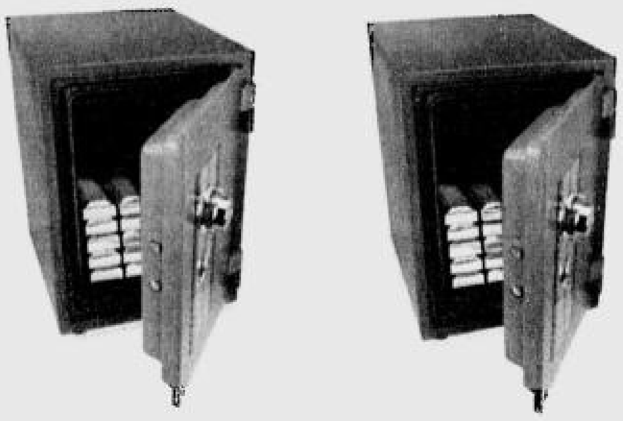

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Review center admits giving nursing 'leak' to its students

By Alcuin Papa

THE CONTROVERSIAL R.A. GAPUZ REVIEW Center has admitted that it gave its students a document containing exam topics the day before the June 11 and 12 nursing board examinations.

In a press conference yesterday, Ray Gapuz, founder of the review center, said that he did not know if the 18-page manuscript was a "leak" and if it actually contained the exact questions in the licensing exams.

Gapuz said the document had been faxed to him by a student and he approved its dissemination to other review students.

The review center's policy, he said, was to review materials obtained by students from other sources before dissemination. This was because, in the past, other review materials only succeeded in "distracting" students.

This time, however, Gapuz said he merely browsed through the manuscript, not bothering to make a thorough evaluation before approving it for dissemination.

"I did not go through the nitty-gritty. I received the fax, coursed through my staff, on June 10. I was asked to evaluate the paper. I browsed through it (manuscript) and asked [my] students if they wanted a copy [because] they can use it as reference. So it was a choice of the students—if they wanted to have a copy or not," Gapuz said.

He explained that it was common practice for students of different review centers to exchange materials.

"Students enroll in different review centers and they share materials. Our policy here is they should ask [our] permission if the materials can be read, distributed or not at all," Gapuz said.

No involvement in cheating

He insisted that they were not involved in any cheating in the last nursing exam and that the alleged "leakage" might have come from rival review centers.

Asked if the topics in the document had appeared in the June 11 and 12 exam, Gapuz replied: "Allegedly, *sabi nila* (That's what they say)."

He claimed that the alleged leakage in the last nursing board exam started when a group of students celebrated in a bar after the board exams. They boasted about their respective review centers' high passing rates.

Gapuz said a student "complained to a local TV station claiming that there had been a leakage and named our company."

Last month, 92 nursing graduates in Baguio City petitioned the Professional Regulatory Commission (PRC) to place the members of the Board of Nursing "under preventive suspension" for test leaks. Some 425 members of the Philippine Nurses Association Inc. (PNA) joined them.

The petitioners also asked the PRC to stop the release of the test results until it could determine how some examinees identified with the R.A. Gapuz Review Center obtained handwritten samples of the tests.

The complainants also alleged that the R.A. Gapuz Review Center distributed answers to exam questions which they called "emergency drills," the night before the June 11 and 12 board examinations.

R.A. Gapuz, which has 16 review centers nationwide, has denied the allegations.

The results of the exams had not been released as reports said the PRC might nullify the exam and hold a re-take.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Wednesday, July 19, 2006
15h Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Is 10:5-7, 13-16
Gospel: Matthew 11:25-27

On one occasion Jesus said, "Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I praise you, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to simple people. Yes, Father, this is what pleased you.

Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him."

Commentary

Now the prophet cries out the justice of God against Assyria that is intent on destroying Israel. Assyria is a saw, a rod, a staff; but it is God that wields it. It can do nothing by itself. God knows what Assyria intends, but God will bring fire, not glory to them. This is the God of old, centuries before Jesus. And Jesus brings a wisdom and a knowledge of God that is of lowliness, service, the care of the most lacking and vulnerable. God is human in Jesus and Jesus sides with the bottom, with those who are always the victims: the murdered, despoiled by nations, and the poor. And no one knows this God but Jesus and who he chooses to reveal him to. Do we know this God of Jesus at all?

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MITSUBISHI MOTORS

Church urged: Be more open on sex education

By Alcuin Papa

CIVIC GROUPS IN FAVOR OF SEX EDUcation in the public schools yesterday called on the Catholic Church to be "more open and less judgmental" on the issue in order to make young people better aware of their sexuality and help them make the right decisions in their lives.

In a joint statement, the Democratic Socialist Women of the Philippines (DSWP), the Philippine Legislators' Committee on Population and Development Foundation Inc. (PLCPD) and the Theia Initiative called on other denominations and churches as well to do the same thing "in the face of existing realities and help young people rise above the immorality of ignorance."

"Young people who can make intelligent decisions in life will, in the future, become more productive, responsible and well-rounded citizens and leaders. Surely this is something that parents, teachers, government officials and, more so, our church leaders will want to happen," the groups said.

The statement was signed by Elizabeth Angsioco, DSWP national chair; Ramon San Pascual, PLCPD executive director, and Giney Villar, Theia Initiative executive director. It was released yesterday during a forum dubbed "Sex, Lives and Lesson Guides: The RHducation of the Filipino Youth" at the Sulo Hotel in Quezon City.

The three groups cited the University of the Philippines Population Institute (UPPI) survey conducted in 2002 entitled the "Young Adult Fertility Survey III" which showed that a significant number of young people were engaging in premarital sex.

"Their (Catholic Church) arguments should be based on evidence. They should see the reality of the issue. Times have changed. We all have our own responsibilities in protecting our children," said UPPI's Dr. Corazon Raymundo at the forum.

Raymundo said UPPI surveys showed that what young people knew about sex "does not correspond to their experience. There are many myths and misconceptions. Our surveys have proven that sex education prevents initiation into premarital sex."

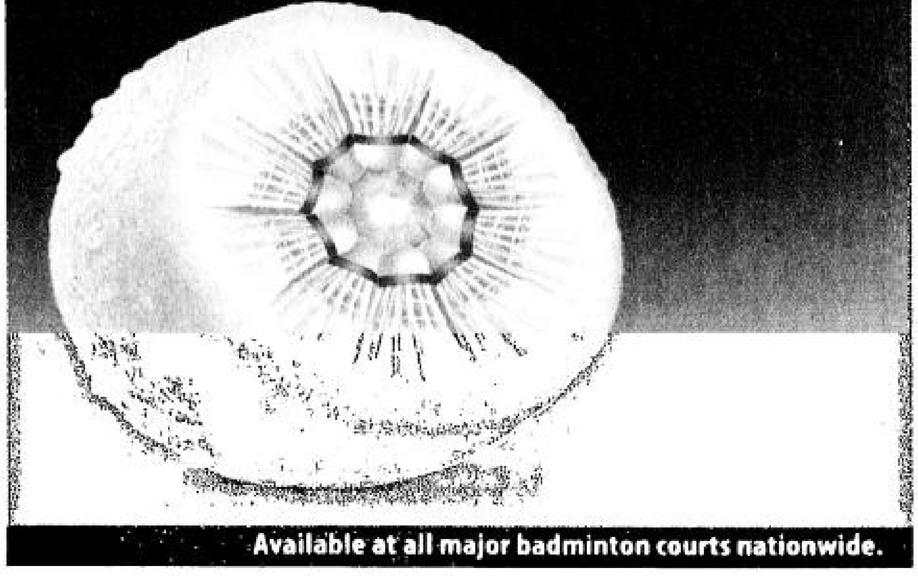
Elizabeth Pangalanan, executive director of the Center for Integrative and Development Studies (UP-CIDS), said young people had a right to information and education according to the Constitution.

"What we have is the State conceding to one religion in matters related to reproductive health, and not just sex education. The State should enforce these rights. The Catholic Church has often exaggerated certain issues and takes them out of context. What it needs is honesty and truth-telling, which they often preach, regarding sex education," Pangalanan said.

Muntinlupa Rep. Ruffy Biazon, a member of PLCPD, warned that the government must set a "national policy" on the issue of sex education or there will be "negative effects."

He said that leaving sex education up to the parents would be "problematic" since there was a need to educate the parents, too.

The three groups also asked the Department of Education to continue with its plan to make sex education available in the public schools by eventually releasing "Lesson Guides on Adolescent Reproductive Health."



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FIFTY YEARS

No coup plot; we didn't want it to happen, Querubin tells NBI

By Margaux C. Ortiz

"THERE WAS NO COUP PLOT."

Embattled Marine Col. Ariel Querubin stressed this yesterday in denying that he had played any part in anti-administration activities last February.

Querubin appeared at the National Bureau of Investigation to answer questions related to the NBI's probe of the failed Feb. 24 coup attempt.

"I want everyone to know that there was no coup because we did not want it to happen," Querubin told reporters in an interview.

In his affidavit to the Ad Hoc Investigating Committee of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), Querubin said he had merely informed his superiors on the night of Feb. 23 of the junior officers' plan to hold a peaceful march on Edsa on Feb. 24, the 20th anniversary of the People Power Revolution.

"If there was indeed a plan, they (superiors) were able to prevent and do something about it," said Querubin, who won the Medal for Valor for his bravery in combat against Moro insurgents in 2001.

Querubin also said he had not recruited any Marine personnel for the alleged coup attempt.

'Spontaneous activity'

"It is not my job to recruit because I'm already a senior officer. I did not agitate anyone and I am against any bloody takeover of the government," Querubin stressed.

Querubin's lawyer, Rodrigo Artuz, said that the standoff on Feb. 26 at Fort Bonifacio was a spontaneous act that resulted from the relief of the Marine commandant, Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda.

Querubin also told reporters that he knew businessman Iñigo Zobel personally and that he was not a coup financier. He said that Zobel, who is in Spain, was the godfather of his 12-year-old daughter Faye.

Spending time with children

He also denied he was standing beside Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim in the controversial video that showed the latter withdrawing support from President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Querubin added that he had been spending time with his seven children at home after he was placed under house arrest.

"My children have always looked up to me as their hero. It saddens me how they, especially the younger ones, do not understand what is happening," Querubin said, tears glistening in his eyes.

Probe of alleged financiers

Construction magnate Philip Cruz is set to appear on Thursday to give his affidavit to the NBI after his name was mentioned in an NBI investigation into the role of businessmen in the February incident, his lawyer Alberto Reyes said.

"My client is very supportive of President Arroyo and he has not been involved in any matter that would destabilize the government," Reyes added.

Zobel, Cruz and ABC-5 television chair Antonio "Tonyboy" Cojuangco had been named by former Ambassador Roy Señeres as being among the civilians who had encouraged military officers to withdraw support from Ms Arroyo. All three have denied Señeres's claim.

'Beaver' Lopez denies link to coup plot

By Luige A. del Puerto

MANUEL "BEAVER" LOPEZ, A son-in-law of ousted President Joseph Estrada, yesterday denied any involvement in the alleged plot to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The 38-year-old scion of one of the country's wealthiest families recalled that he had previously admitted that his foundation, Saludo sa Kawal Pilipino, had provided P2 million in March for a cooperative which soldiers implicated in the 2003 Oakwood mutiny had planned to set up for their families.

This was after Estrada had said he was giving millions of pesos to Magdalo soldiers and their relatives.

"Everything was done in good faith," said Lopez in a telephone interview with dzBB radio from the United States, where he is vacationing.

Lopez said he was surprised to learn from newspaper reports in Manila that he had been asked to appear for questioning by the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group of the Philippine National Police.

Lim tells court: No water, no light

BRIG. Gen. Danilo Lim waits at the Court of Appeals with his lawyer at the start of the hearings of the habeas corpus case filed by his wife. JM GUIAO PUNZALAN

INVITED BY THE NBI for questioning, Marine Col. Ariel Querubin obliges. REM ZAMORA

From page A1

should be held in the barracks or military quarters.

"The government has admitted that there were no formal charges filed against General Lim yet," Verdadero said in a petition for habeas corpus filed by Lim's wife Aloysia last week.

The 51-year-old Lim, wearing a barong Tagalog and black pants, was brought to the court following an order on July 14 by Peralta.

Assistant Solicitor General Amparo Tang said that the charges against Lim were being prepared.

They stemmed from a move by disgruntled soldiers allegedly led by Lim to withdraw support from Ms Arroyo on Feb. 24 in an attempt to force her to resign over claims she stole the 2004 presidential election. The plot was aborted after Ms Arroyo declared a state of national emergency.

Senga's decision

Tang said there was "probable cause" to charge Lim with violating the Articles of War, including attempted mutiny, causing disorder detrimental to military discipline and conduct unbecoming of an officer and a gentleman.

She said this was the recommendation of the Provost Marshall and that the Judge Advocate General's Office had already referred it to AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Generoso Senga.

General Senga yesterday told reporters that he would make a decision within the next 48 hours on the recommendation submitted on July 7 by an eight-man fact-finding board headed by the AFP inspector general, Rear Adm. Rufino Lopez.

Copies of a draft report earlier leaked to reporters said that the panel had recommended court-martial proceedings against Lim and 19 Scout Ranger officers, ex-Marine commandant Maj. Gen. Renato Miranda, Col. Ariel Querubin and 16 other Marine officers and enlisted personnel.

Tang said it was Senga's decision not to refer the matter for a pre-trial investigation until the completion of the investigation of Querubin, who is also detained.

'What is the truth?'

Associate Justice Eleazar de los Santos asked Tang in exasperation: "What is the truth? Filed or prepared, we want the truth!"

Tang replied that the filing of cases in a military court was different from civilian courts.

De los Santos said: "You are very fast in ordering his detention." He added that if the military leadership was slow in referring the matter for pre-trial investigation, then it could be unsure about its basis for the charges it is preparing against Lim.

"Perhaps the chief of staff is not convinced that General Lim did commit a crime?" De los Santos said. He then asked Lim about the living conditions at the detention facility in Tanay.

Lim said he would welcome being returned to his Fort Bonifacio quarters.

The court gave the parties three days to submit their memoranda, after which the case would be considered submitted for resolution.

About 20 civilian members of the Reform the Armed Forces-Young Officers Union (RAM-YOU) picketed in front of the Court of Appeals expressing support for Lim. *With a report from Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

Davao broadcaster ...

From page A1

AND THEN THERE were 45 journalists killed since President Arroyo began occupying the seat of power. The latest is broadcaster Armando Pace.

known as "Rackman," reached Rizal Avenue, one of the busiest streets in Digos City, one of at least two men also on a motorcycle shot him three times, killing him.

The assassin got off his bike and fired several more shots at the 51-year-old Pace, who toppled over on the concrete pavement.

Pace, who often criticized corrupt, arrogant politicians and exposed their wrongdoings on his daily radio program, became the 45th member of media murdered since President Macapagal-Arroyo took power in 2001. He was the eighth journalist killed this year.

By the INQUIRER count, Pace was also the 106th journalist to have been assassinated since democracy was restored in the country in 1986 with the ouster of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

'Most sued broadcaster'

The unidentified killers escaped.

Pace was once imprisoned after being sued for libel. He would often brag that he was the most sued broadcaster with 99 libel suits.

"He was hit three times, once in the neck and once in the left breast just above the heart and once in the shoulder," said Chief Insp. Cesar Cabuhat, city police chief.

Pace was gunned down shortly after he had hosted his 12:30-to-1 p.m. daily commentary over Radio Ukay dxDS, a station owned by the University of Mindanao Broadcasting Network.

Trailed by killers

Pace, married and a resident of Barangay Tres de Mayo, was shot with a .45-cal. pistol, police said.

He could not have been killed in a more public place. Rizal Avenue is a busy street used by motorists coming from other parts of Mindanao en route to General Santos City. It is also where many commercial establishments and the Davao del Sur National High School are located.

Cabuhat said the killers could have followed Pace from the radio station.

Murder work-related

After the gunmen fled, bystanders picked Pace up and rushed him to the Davao del Sur provincial hospital, where he died minutes later, Cabuhat said.

Pace's family refused to talk about the killing but Cabuhat said investigators thought the murder was work-related.

Cabuhat said the police had asked Radio Ukay to furnish them with recordings of Pace's radio programs to speed up the investigation.

Police were also looking for witnesses to help them identify the assailants.

Warning to media

Media practitioners in Digos said Pace's death was a chilling warning to them and a threat to the freedom of speech.

Carmelito Francisco, chair of the Davao City chapter of the National Union of Journalists in the Philippines (NUJP), doubted that Pace's death would be solved.

Francisco cited previous attacks against journalists that have remained unsolved to this day.

Pace was the 8th journalist killed in the country this year, the NUJP said.

On June 19, journalist couple George and Maricel Vigo were killed in Kidapawan City, some 90 km north of this city.

Vigo was a stringer for the Union of Catholic Asian News, while his wife hosted a program over radio station dxND.

No suspect has been arrested in the Vigos' slayings although authorities say they have identified some suspects.

Palace: We'll go same old merry ways with bishops

From page A1

they held a plenary July 8-9 on the worst political crisis to engulf President Macapagal-Arroyo's administration.

"The government will continue to regard bishops and other church leaders as reliable moral guides and sounding boards for the formulation and implementation of government policies that affect the people at the community level, especially the poor," Claudio said.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said the government had a responsibility to keep in constant touch with the Church and provide for the needs of the least fortunate.

"This is part of the government's job no matter what the others say about it," Defensor said.

Unappetizing picture

Defensor said that most of the Palace meetings with the bishops were initiated by the Church leaders themselves. He said the bishops wanted to be enlightened on government policy.

"But I don't think they will invite us again with what happened. But if they ask us again, we will meet with them, we have to explain," Defensor said.

Claudio said it was important to continue the dialogue process despite critics painting an unappetizing picture of the Palace-Church meetings during the weeklong CBCP retreat and plenary.

A source from the CBCP claimed that Malacañang had arranged what was described as a victory party for pro-Arroyo bishops after the CBCP came out with a statement saying that it was "not inclined at the present moment to favor the impeachment process as a means of establishing the truth" of whether Ms Arroyo manipulated the 2004 vote.

The affair was supposedly arranged by Fatima "Nena" Valdes, undersecretary for religious affairs, who was also tagged as having distributed cash gifts to the bishops during their plenary.

Nothing wrong

Defensor flatly denied the Palace had hosted a victory dinner for the bishops and that no cash envelopes were given out by Palace emissaries during the CBCP meeting.

Claudio said there was "nothing wrong" with channeling some forms of government assistance through the parishes since the bishops are deemed to be the least prone to partisan grandstanding, politicking and graft.

The national government normally courses its donations through local government units and nongovernment organizations but Defensor said the administration had been turned off by their infighting and jealousies.

Defensor claimed that intrigues were being sowed to discredit the CBCP position against the filing of a new impeachment case against the President.

One of best-armed PNP units may be in Isabela

From page A1

PNP Directorate for Logistics.

The rifle can fire 600 rounds a minute (10 bullets per second) and can kill a person 1.5 km away, according to Jane's Guns Recognition Guide. Its magazine capacity is 30 rounds and its cartridge is wider than those of other high-powered weapons.

Regis said he would appreciate it if local governments, before donating firearms, coordinated with his office or the local logistics unit so they could be advised on what weapons to buy.

Rep. Anthony Miranda and Vice Mayor Armando Tan have asked Camp Crame officials to reject the donation, alleging "illegal and unlawful circumstances" in getting the city council's approval for the deal.

The mayor dismissed her rivals' claims as baseless. She told the INQUIRER that the guns were bought "at most affordable prices."

Unfazed by the complaint, Navarro turned over on Monday the AK-47 assault rifles worth P900,000, two Rock Island armory HP sniper rifles worth P160,000 and four Federal submachine pistols worth P250,000 to the Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) unit and noncommissioned policemen here.

Navarro also issued 70 pistols worth P1,413,550 for 70 policemen.

Police morale

The majority of the city council members approved the resolution to buy and donate the firearms, saying that "adequately armed and equipped officers will increase the morale of the police force and such will redound to the benefit of the residents."

For the past months, the city has been experiencing a series of multimillion-peso robberies and car thefts.

But Vice Mayor Tan said the gun purchase came on the heels of the local government's austerity measures and that the funds should have been used for social and infrastructure projects.

"Will she arm the police or her private army? I do not know who will benefit from the [gun purchase]. She should have allotted that money for the communication and transport facilities for policemen. That is a better option," he said.

SPO4 Loriel Mamaclay, SWAT team leader, said the guns would be used to fight criminality as only 35 of the 135 city policemen had side arms issued by the Philippine National Police.

"Almost all of our noncommissioned officers have not been issued firearms so we welcome these issuances," he said.

Senior Supt. Rolando Diaz, city police chief, said he was happy over the donation as he voiced confidence that the police could now fight robbers and other criminals.

Napolcom guidelines

Although the purchase of ammunition has been decentralized—meaning each regional police unit can buy bullets as it sees fit—Regis said the National Police Commission had already specified what firearms and bullets to purchase.

If the PNP regional office buys AK-47 bullets for the Santiago police, it might be buying equipment not specified either by the Napolcom or the PNP, the official said.

For the PNP to buy these bullets, the use of the AK-47 would have to be approved by Camp Crame and Napolcom and must be subjected to testing and evaluation, Regis said.

Senior Supt. Job Antonio, chief of the logistics office's supply management division, surmised that the AK-47 rifles were imported. Russia and China were among the countries that produce it, he said.

The logistics officers agreed that an AK-47 was cheaper than other high-powered firearms, such as the Bushmaster, which could cost up to P100,000 each.

Prices of AK-47s being sold on the Internet range from $500 to $1,500, depending on the rifle's variant and accessories. *With reports from Luige A. del Puerto in Manila and Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research*

Trench collapses, killing 2

WEAKENED BY CONSTANT RAINS, A pile of loose soil collapsed into a trench in front of a supermarket in Makati City last night, killing two construction workers.

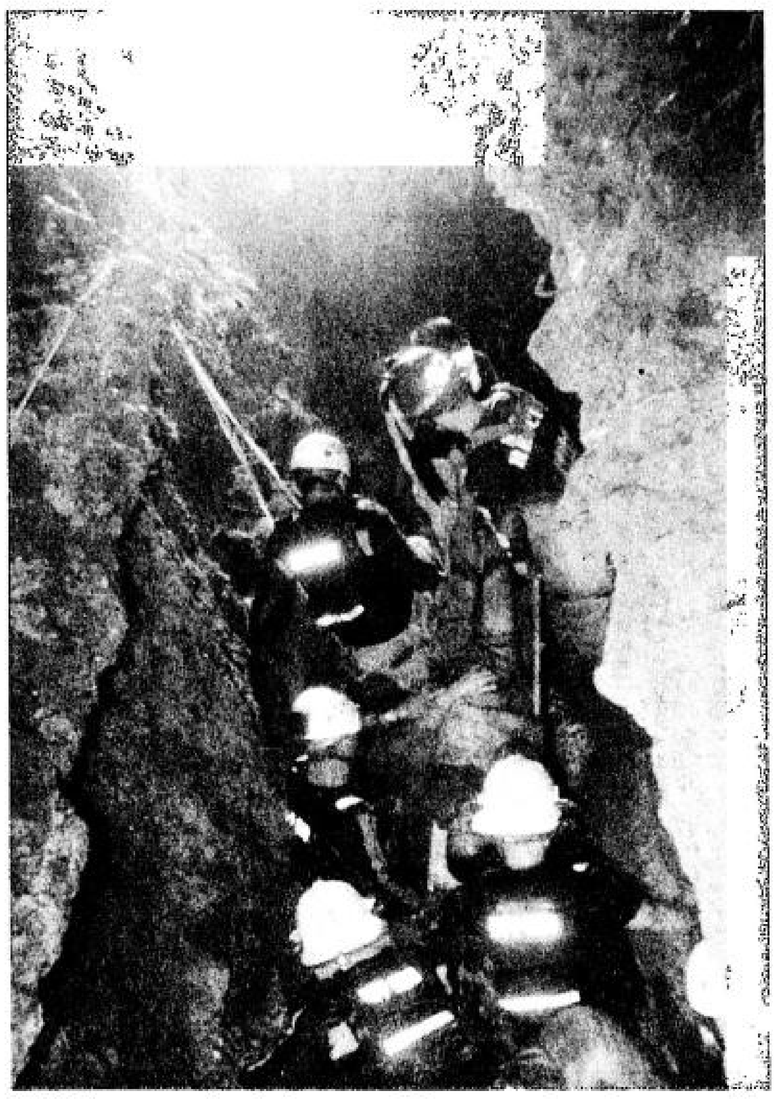
At around 7 p.m., six construction workers were in the 12-foot deep trench across from Cash 'N Carry Supermarket on Filmore Street, when a mound of soil that had been piled above them gave way, rescuers said.

Federico Ples, Cash 'N Carry's administrative manager, said the construction was meant to improve the drainage system of the supermarket, currently being upgraded to a mall.

Quoting witnesses, Makati Rescue's John Karingal said three of the workers managed to climb to safety, but the three others did not make it out.

First to be rescued was Danilo Paquiros, pulled out of the trench at 7:35 p.m. Coherent when saved, Paquiros told rescuers about the two others who were trapped below.

It took rescuers another 20 minutes to find the next man, identified by rescuers only as Zaldy, who was pulled out with no vital signs at 7:50 p.m. The last trapped worker, who rescuers identified as Aldy, was dug up at 8:10 p.m. He was also pulled out with no pulse or breath, Melendres said. *Tarra V. Quismundo*



MAKATI rescue workers bring up one of the construction workers trapped in the trench they were digging in Makati yesterday. JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Pimentel's impeachment compromise: Snap polls

By Philip C. Tubeza

SENATE MINORITY LEADER AQUILINO Pimentel Jr. yesterday threw his support behind a proposal to scrap the opposition's bid to impeach President Macapagal-Arroyo if she agrees to hold snap presidential elections in which she will not participate.

Pimentel said he was for the proposal of Taguig-Pateros Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano to hold snap elections in lieu of the impeachment bid, which its proponents have admitted would need a miracle to succeed.

"A snap election is the most expedient way out of the problem of Gloria, especially now that the vague pastoral letter of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines seems to imply that impeachment is not the solution," Pimentel said in a statement.

Pimentel said both the administration and the opposition should seriously consider Cayetano's proposal as a way "out of the political turmoil hounding the nation due to unresolved doubts about the legitimacy of the Arroyo presidency and the scandals that have rocked her government."

He said a snap election would provide the answer as to who will succeed President Arroyo.

"Also, the CBCP's doubts as to who will provide the leadership of the nation will be solved by such a political exercise," he said.

"As I have time and again said, it does not matter who will win the snap election—whether it is the candidate of the administration or the opposition or of an independent group," he said.

Pimentel said what was important was for the electorate to get "the chance to render a verdict on the legitimacy of the Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo presidency."

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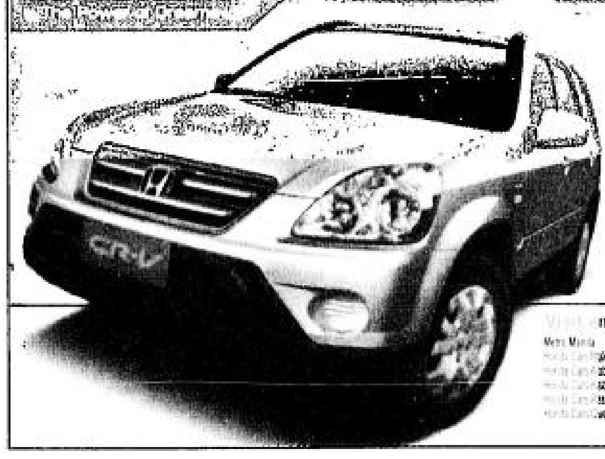

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Experts fear 'explosive eruption' of Mayon

By Ephraim Aguilar
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—AS MORE LAVA continued to flow from Mt. Mayon—which volcanologists said could turn into an explosive eruption within weeks if the magma pool rapidly increases—35 evacuation centers in eight surrounding towns and cities were being readied by the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council.

Jukes Nuñez of the PDCC plans and operations division said the evacuation centers were inspected by engineers and health officers on Monday and their reports on the condition of the centers were expected to be submitted to the PDCC today.

Nuñez said the PDCC was seeking the help of nongovernment organizations to provide water containers, beddings and vehicles necessary for evacuation.

He added that the common need of the evacuation centers were sanitary toilets.

Since Sunday, PDCC head Cedric Daep had been going around the eight towns and cities to brief residents on evacuation procedures, which will be implemented as soon as the volcano's alert level is raised to four by the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology (Phivolcs).

In a meeting on July 15, the PDCC and the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas agreed that the local radio stations would be the main medium for conveying evacuation instructions to the residents.

PDCC data showed there were 74,969 persons or 13,870 families to be evacuated from 34 threatened villages in the eight towns and cities.

Phivolcs, meanwhile, in its latest advisory issued at 8 a.m. yesterday said Mayon continued to expel rocks and lava during the last 24-hour observation period.

MAN AND ANIMAL go about their usual daily life unmindful of the danger posed by an erupting Mayon Volcano nearby.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Seismic activity around the volcano was dominated by 100 short-duration harmonic tremors associated with the intrusion of magma and the detachment of lava fragments, it said.

The lava flow has extended to 1,000 meters downslope from Monday's reported 800 meters.

Fragments of incandescent boulders were observed by Phivolcs at about 3,000 meters from the summit at an elevation of 700 meters above sea level in Bonga gully.

Alert level three remained hoisted while residents immediately beyond the 6-km permanent danger zone (PDZ) around the volcano's peak were told to watch out for pyroclastic and lava flows, rockfalls and small avalanches and be ready to evacuate at first notice.

Mayor Noel Rosal of Legazpi City, which lies at the foot of the volcano, has invited tourists to enjoy the spectacle.

Lava and rocks have been flowing from Mayon's near-perfect cone at 2,474 meters (8,118 feet) for five days now.

The authorities have extended the 6-km danger zone around the peak of the volcano to 7 kms on the southeastern slope, where most of the lava and debris have been rolling down, The Associated Press has reported.

"The number of earthquakes has decreased but the lava continues to advance," said resident volcanologist Eduardo Laguerta. *With an AP report*

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Supreme Court of the Philippines
Judicial and Bar Council
Manila

A. The Judicial and Bar Council announces that the panel interview of the following applicants for the position of **DEPUTY OMBUDSMAN FOR MINDANAO**, which was originally scheduled on July 27, 2006 shall be conducted earlier on July 25, 2006.

Tuesday, July 25, 2006,
9:00 AM - 12:00 NOON

1. ARANCON, MARIA CORAZON A.
2. AVILA, EUSEBIO M.
3. BENDIGO, RAUL B.
4. CHIONGSON, ROBERTO S.
5. DARAY, MARIVIC T.

Tuesday, July 25, 2006,
2:00-5:00 P.M.

1. ELMAN, RODOLFO M.
2. MACABANDO, PACA-AMBUNG C.
3. MONTEROSO, HUMPHREY T.
4. SIPACO, ALBERTO JR. B.

B. The JBC also announces that the following are applicants for different judgeship positions:

MUNICIPAL TRIAL COURT (MTC): (REGION III) – CUYAPO, NUEVA ECIJA: BAUTISTA, Leo Cecilio D.; DALIT, Jessie D.; SADURAL, Erick A.; SANDOVAL, Ronald D. **(REGION IV) - SAN ANTONIO, QUEZON:** ABANIA, Avenar A.; PEREZ, Edwina Macalintal; SARMIENTO, Sheila Angela Palo **GUMACA, QUEZON:** BONIFACIO, Benno L.; CAPARROS, Arnel B.; MATA, Elizabeth San Juan **(REGION V) - CARAMOAN, CAMARINES SUR:** ALARCON, ERNESTO M.; AGANAN, Jorge John D.; CO, Sarina Rosa Gonzales; FERNANDO, Alan C.; PEÑAFLOR, Jacinto Jr. B.; PORNILLOS, Wenifredo Jr. G.; POSUGAC, Eli C. **SIMURA, CAMARINES SUR:** AGANAN, Jorge John D.; CO, Sarina Rosa Gonzales; FERNANDO, Alan C.; POSUGAC, Eli C. **(REGION VIII) – LILOAN, SOUTHERN LEYTE:** ALBAO, Fabio Jr. T.; CUATON, Wenifredo C.; POSION, Marisa Renomeron **(REGION X) – MAINIT, SURIGAO DEL NORTE:** ALVARADO, Adelyn Pongcol; BENANING,Ombra B.; CORO, Manuel G.

MUNICIPAL CIRCUIT TRIAL COURT (MCTC): (REGION I) - SAN VICENTE-SAN ILDEFONSO, ILOCOS SUR: ASPACIO, Margarette Anunciata; GALACGAC, Marvin A.; RINGPIS, Rogelio A.; ROSAL, Pedro R. **(REGION II) - SOLANA-ENRILE, CAGAYAN:** AGLAUA, Racquel Reyes; CARAG, Jesusa Liquigan; CASTILLO, Edmar Sr. P.; DALIUAG, Marinette Gavino; DARAN, Alexander P.; GAÑAC, Norman C.; ISRAEL, Malta Grace Deray; REYES, Isidro S. **(REGION IV) - LUCBAN-SAMPALOC, QUEZON:** AYUMA, Godofredo G.; ORIAS, Severiano O.; REDOR, Maria May Schroth **(REGION VII) – INABANGA-BUENAVISTA, BOHOL:** MELENCION, Rey V.; PIOLLO, Aster A.; VARQUEZ, Laebeth Lungay; VIODOR, Cirilo N. **TALIBON-JETAFE, BOHOL:** CABALLERO, Calberito M.; MELENCION, Rey V.; PIOLLO, Aster A. **(REGION IX) - SALUG-GODOD, ZAMBOANGA DEL NORTE:** BATULA, Gil L.; LACAYA, Reymar L.; MALON, Eyahiya Salip A. **(REGION X) - CLAVER-GIGAGUIT, SURIGAO DEL NORTE:** ALVARADO, Adelyn Pongcol; BENANING, Ombra B.; CORO, Manuel G.

The public may submit any sworn complaint, written report, or opposition against any of the aforesaid applicants not later than JULY 29, 2006 to the JBC Secretariat, 2nd Flr., Centennial Bldg., Supreme Court, Padre Faura St., Manila (Tel. 552-9512 Fax No. 552-9598).

July 18, 2006

(Sgd.) **MA. LUISA D. VILLARAMA**
Clerk of Court &
Ex Officio Secretary

(PDI—July 19, 2006)

Albay execs declare state of calamity in danger zone

LEGAZPI CITY—THE ALBAY provincial board yesterday afternoon declared areas within the seven-kilometer extended danger zone under a state of calamity as a preparation for Mt. Mayon's major eruption, which the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said could be within two weeks or even earlier.

Albay Gov. Fernando Gonzalez said he requested the declaration and it was approved by the board to ensure that the funds will be ready and necessary preparations be put in place before the affected people are evacuated as Mt. Mayon's rumbling intensifies.

Closely monitoring

Eduardo Laguerta, Phivolcs-Legazpi's senior science research specialist and resident volcanologist, said there were no recorded major volcanic activities yesterday that could lead to the raising of alert level.

He said, though, that Phivolcs was closely monitoring the volcano's magma density and lava extrusion rate as it had been observed to be increasing since Friday night when a glowing summit of the volcano was observed and the alert level was elevated to three.

Be vigilant

Residents living immediately outside the six-kilometer-radius permanent danger zone have been advised by the Phivolcs to be vigilant of hazardous pyroclastic and lava flows, rockfalls, and small avalanches from the 2,474-meter volcano.

Based on reports from the Provincial Disaster Coordinating Council here, there are six municipalities and 21 villages within the six-to-eight-kilometer distance from the crater with 6,724 families or 37,017 persons. *Ephraim Aguilar, Southern Luzon Bureau*

THE UNDEAD. Dante Cardel Jr. sits up looking very much less like the dead boy his parents thought he was a month ago.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Doomed boy with tumor is back from the 'dead'

By Ephraim Aguilar, PDI
Southern Luzon Bureau

LEGAZPI CITY—IT'S BEEN A month since a 10-year-old boy from this city miraculously came back to life, 10 hours after he was allegedly pronounced dead of a brain tumor in a hospital in Manila.

On June 21, the parents of Dante Cardel Jr. or "Jun" as he was called by his family, was brought to the Philippine General Hospital. The Child Sponsorship for Community Development Inc. paid for the trip and the treatment.

"At 10 a.m. that day, the doctors at PGH said my son had a slim chance of survival. That afternoon, he was already dependent on the machines attached to his body. At 4 p.m., he was pronounced dead," Cardel, Jun's father, told the INQUIRER.

However, Dr. Michael Tee, assistant to the director for public affairs of the PGH, said the hospital did not pronounce boy dead.

"We did not issue any certification that the child died. We recommended that [he] be subjected to an operation to decompress his tumor but the parents refused. What we did was let the parents sign an agreement that the hospital would not be accountable for anything that might happen to the child. We respected their decision," Tee said.

Dr. Vicente Tanchuling, Jun's doctor here, said Jun had been diagnosed with serious cerebellar tumor and typhoid fever.

A brain tumor is the abnormal growth of tissue within the skull that occurs most commonly in children.

"The doctors said my son's tumor had burst in his skull. At that point, my wife and I accepted that he would be gone soon. When he was proclaimed dead, some of our relatives left [for Legazpi] to prepare the house for his wake," Cardel said.

That same night, Cardel and his wife transported Jun back to Legazpi City in a van. They took turns holding his lifeless body in their arms.

After 10 hours, Cardel felt his son's chest grow warm. They had reached Naga City, some two hours from their destination.

"His chest was warm, but the rest of his body was still cold. He was not breathing," Cardel said.

When the family reached their house at Barangay Puro, the father lay his erstwhile dead son on the sofa. Suddenly, the boy moved.

"My son embraced me. In a weak voice, he called me 'Papa.' We were all surprised. We and his grandparents started crying. Although it was early morning, our neighbors came to the house," Cardel said.

Jun was also very thirsty and very hungry.

Cardel said his son told him that "people in heaven do not go hungry" and that he woke up "because Jesus told him to."

After almost a month, the Cardel family has not asked for a medical explanation of what happened.

Cardel, a poor fisherman, said he hoped his son would recover from his illness, even without treatment or medication.

" I can see that my son is better now. He can walk—although not that straight. He can move his body. He can play with other children," he said.

Jun, who has difficulty hearing and speaking, said he wanted to become an engineer someday.

"My son was very smart in school. He was very good in Math; he loved to solve numerical problems. We're just praying he would be completely healed from his sickness," Cardel said.

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Moro rebs kill soildier

SUSPECTED MORO rebels opened fire on a police here, killing one officer, wounding three and leaving two others missing, police said yesterday.

Police officer Ali Akmad, who was slightly wounded, said the attackers stopped him and his colleagues on a road to a village outside Maimbung town.

He said he thought the attackers were soldiers manning a checkpoint.

One officer was killed, two others were hurt and another two missing in the attack, Akmad told reporters from a hospital. *AP*

15th Manila Studies gab set Aug. 2-3

THE MANILA STUDIES ASSOCIATION INC. WILL hold its 15th Annual Manila Studies Conference on Aug. 2-3 at the Tanghalang Leandro V. Locsin, National Commission for Culture and the Arts, at 633 Gen. Luna Street, Intramuros, Manila.

Registration is at 8 a.m. on Aug. 2. A registration fee of P1,500 is required.

The two-day conference will present papers on various topics covering Manila's history and culture. The speakers include Rev. Fr. Pedro G. Galende, OSA, Regalado Trota Jose, Anna Maria (Bambi) L. Harper, Lorelei D.C. de Viana, Norma I. Alarcon, Nida T. Cuevas, Christine Bellen, Antonio C. Hila, PhD, Juan de Mesquida and Pio Andrade.

The Manila Studies Association will also launch its latest and second Manila volume, edited by Violeta S. Ignacio.

For inquiries, contact Lorelei D.C. de Viana (523-1039; 0917-2743648; deviana_ph@yahoo.com); Maria Eloisa P. de Castro (0912-2561281; Eloise_ust@hotmail.com); or Bernardita R. Churchill (021-4575; 0918-4444510; nitachurchill@hotmail.com).

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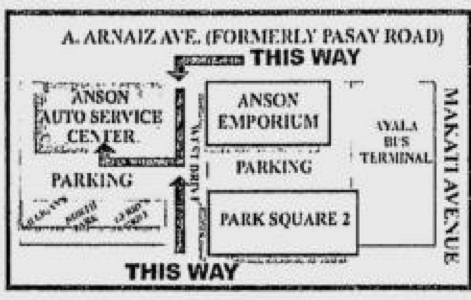

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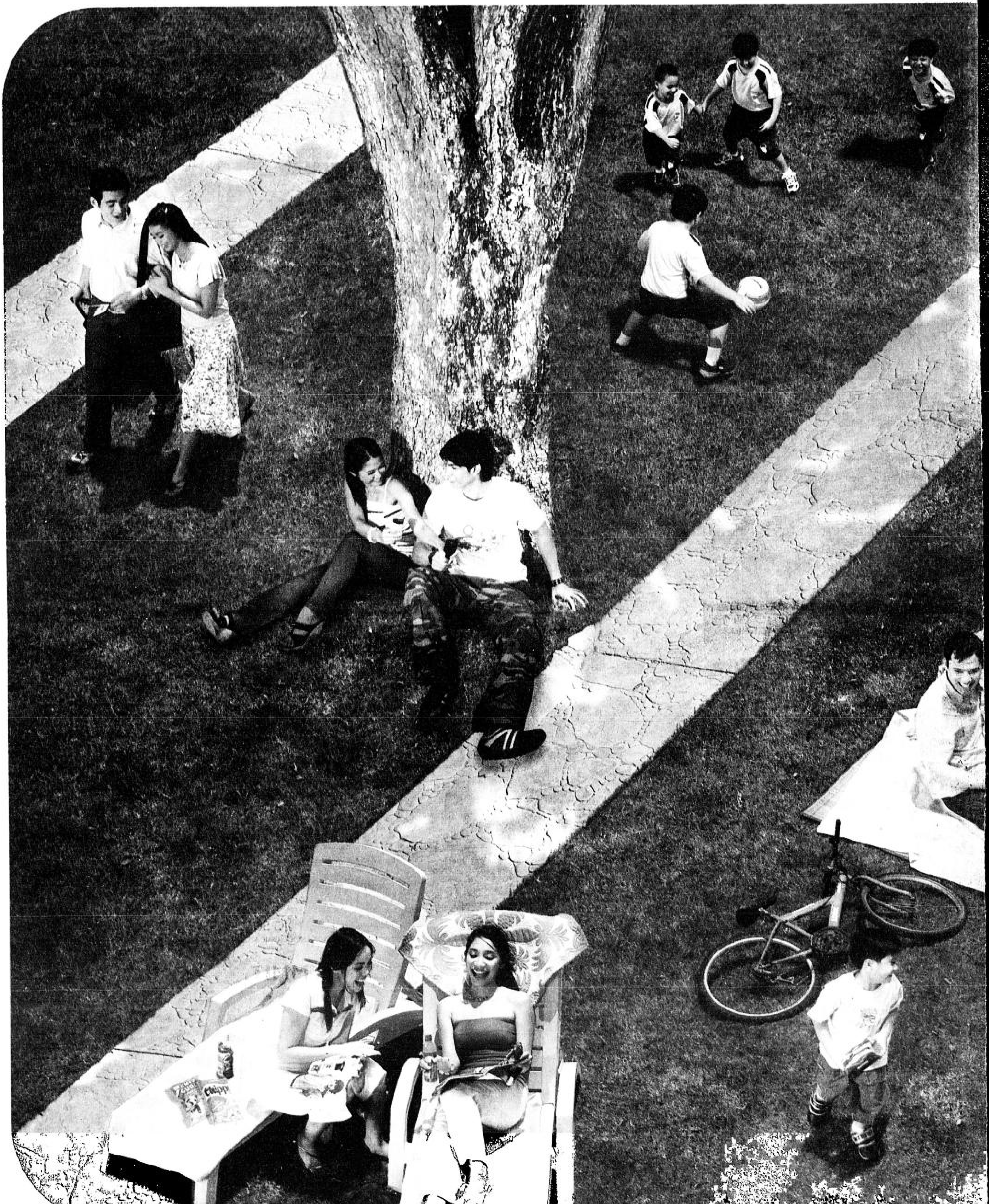
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Feeble response

EDITORIAL

MORE FILIPINOS THAT LIVE IN CEBU CITY AND about half of the total population of Metropolitan Cebu—are imperiled by ongoing events in the Middle East. This comparison should serve to underline how roughly a million Filipinos in Saudi Arabia, and tens of thousand more in Lebanon, Israel and neighboring nations, face uncertainty in a situation former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad darkly suggests may be "World War III."

While the governments of the world marshal their resources to evacuate their nationals from Lebanon, they are also engaged in intense negotiations to prevent the escalation of conflict into a general, and regional, war. Our government has added its voice to the international chorus calling for peace and calm. Beyond that, Philippine policy seems to be what Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo said on Monday: If you're Filipino, and in Lebanon, go to a church and wait.

But for what? Or for whom? Well, among other things, retired Gen. Roy Cimatu, who is trying to make arrangements to fly to Lebanon to supervise the evacuation.

Meanwhile, the Department of Foreign Affairs has raised the alert level to No. 3 (an escalation of violence will raise the level to No. 4). The Philippine Embassy communicates alerts and messages to the Filipino community through a text and phone brigade composed of community leaders. DFA officials and Cimatu have been careful to remind worried Filipinos that the number of Filipinos in Lebanon in "immediate danger" is small: 11 with the United Nations and 50 farmers in "danger zones" who have already been moved out of harm's way. But these official calculations obviously fail to take into account an entirely different kind of collateral damage to which Filipinos are susceptible.

The Philippine Embassy in Lebanon has established an evacuation center at a Catholic church north of Beirut. However, according to DFA spokesperson Gilbert Asuque, the government has yet to make resources available for their removal. What's even more pitiful about the situation of the roughly 120 Filipinos in that church is that they're domestic workers apparently abandoned by their employers. They are the first to be discarded—and if things get worse, surely not the last.

As evacuations undertaken by other nations speed up, many more Filipinos might fall by the wayside, abandoned by their employers, perhaps in areas and under circumstances that would make it difficult for them to follow the government's advice to hunker down in Christian enclaves (a potentially dangerous place to be in hostilities between the Israeli armed forces and Hezbollah fighters and supporters) and wait by the altar for Cimatu to come rescue them.

Indeed, what's puzzling is the seemingly detached attitude of President Macapagal-Arroyo, who was much more determined, and hands-on, in handling measures for the relief of Filipinos endangered by conflict in the Middle East in the past. Even her sourest detractors had to admire the relatively cool and efficient way the President harnessed the diplomatic and armed services to work together to bring Filipinos home then.

If the President is doing something—anything—the country needs to know what it is, not only to reassure Filipinos in the Middle East but their millions of relatives here at home and elsewhere. She was, for example, uncharacteristically silent during her visit to Libya, which took on a strange and other-worldly appearance as she departed under a cloud of rhetoric involving gasoline and pitching her mega-provinces scheme to the Libyan leader, Col. Muammar Qaddafi. The Second Gulf War had her going near the front, so to speak, to attend to the Filipino community in the region. There was no similar side trip from Tripoli, and no echo of the manner in which she cracked the whip in 2003.

This is not the time for recriminations, only time to express what we believe to be a national sense of concern. We had hoped that the lessons of 2003 would lead to an institutionalized response to any eventuality, but the official response thus far seems brave, but feeble. We cannot seem to send an air force plane. We seem unable to gather the resources to send chartered flights. We could not even book an airline seat for Cimatu as quickly as we wanted.

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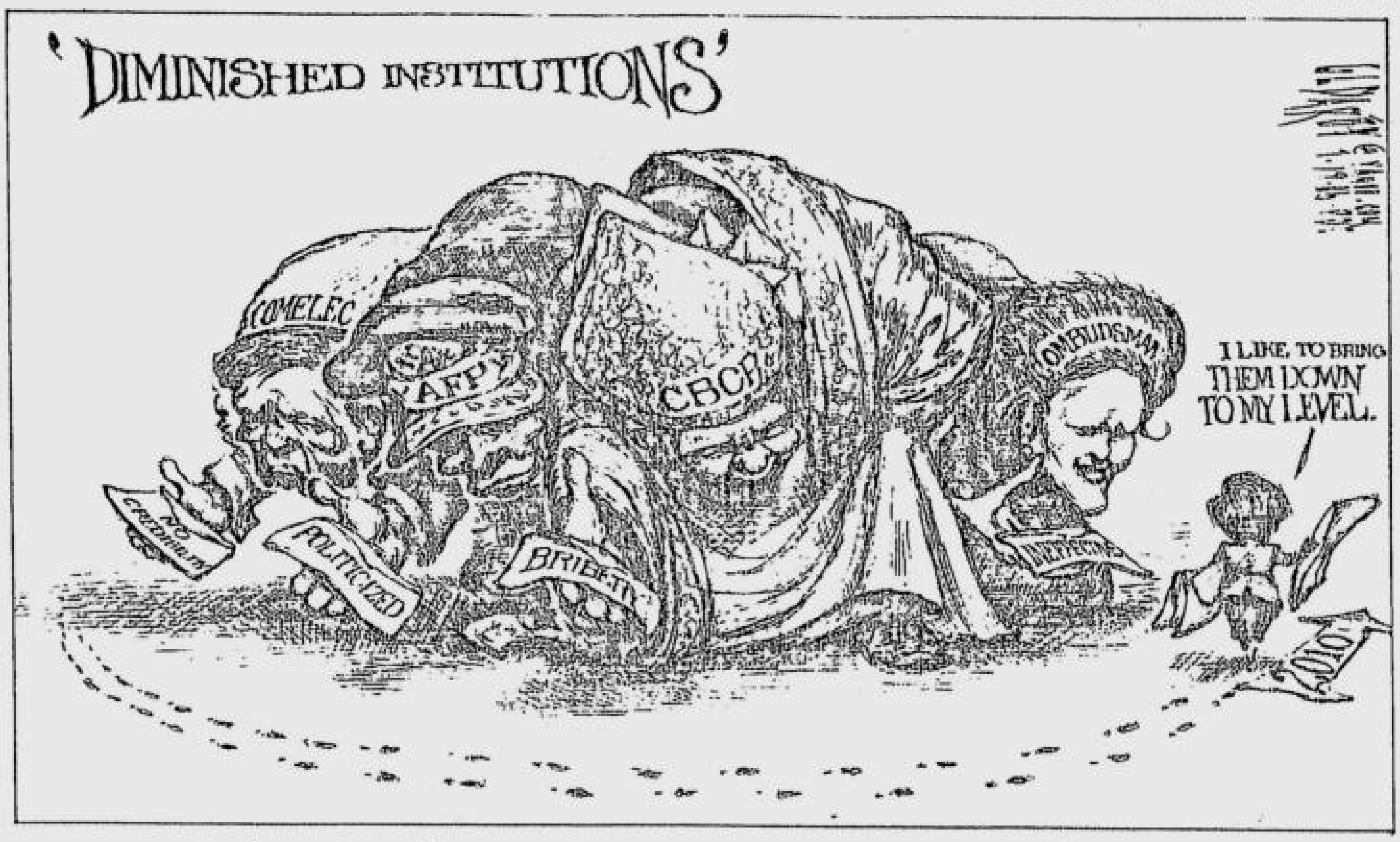


Make Biak na Bato RP's Mt. Rushmore

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

INSTEAD OF TEARING DOWN THE MARBLE hill that is Biak na Bato in Bulacan, we should turn it into our own version of Mt. Rushmore, with the faces of heroes of the Philippine Revolution of 1896 carved on the top of the hill. (Mt. Rushmore has the faces of three American presidents.) I suggest the likenesses of Marcelo H. del Pilar, Andres Bonifacio and Gen. Gregorio del Pilar.

The two Del Pilars are true blue Bulakeños who played important roles in the Revolution. Marcelo was editor of La Solidaridad and a member of the Propaganda Movement that laid the basis for the struggle for independence. Andres Bonifacio, of course, put Biak na Bato on the map and on the pages of history. The seeds of the Katipunan were born within its caves. He may not be a Bulakeño (he was a Manileño) but at least he was a Tagalog like Bulakeños. And Gregorio put the Revolution to a close by dying at the Battle of Tirad Pass as the commander of the rear guard of President Emilio Aguinaldo fleeing the pursuing Americans.

The three of them on Biak na Bato would make this historic spot a shrine to the Revolution and an attraction for domestic and foreign tourists. The Bulacan provincial government, the Department of Tourism, the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the National Historical Institute and the Philippine Tourism Authority can pool their resources and talents to bring this project to reality. Bulacan has an association of artists whose members can do the artwork. That would be a much more worthy and valuable work than leveling Biak na Bato and selling the marble.

The land may belong to the De la Concha family, but all the natural resources on and in and under it, like the marble, belong to the state.

* * *

An item in this column last July 12 about a complaint of artist Fernando Sena against the Maynilad Water Services Inc. (MWSI) for overbilling drew an immediate reaction from a reader who was similarly victimized by the same water concessionaire. Sena's complaint was that he was being billed from June 6 to July 6 for 63 cubic meters (P1,562.34) when according to his daily meter readings (which he patiently writes down on his calendar), it was only 37 cubic meters. The bill had the previous meter reading but not the present one. Instead the word "average" was written on the space for the new meter reading.

Sena went to the MWSI branch office on Del Monte Avenue, Quezon City, to complain, and showed them his calendar. "When they saw the calendar," Sena wrote, "they said *ina*-average *nila ang* reading." Is almost double the old bill "average"? And why not read the meter to be fair to consumers?

Sena advised other consumers to read their water and electric meters regularly so that they will know how much they are consuming and so they will not be victimized by water and power companies. He said that if each customer is overcharged P50 every month, the monthly over-collection could amount to millions, considering that there are hundreds of thousands of customers. And what if the overbilling is P100 or P500 (as in the case of Sena)?

The new reader complaining about overbilling by the MWSI is being overcharged not only by a few hundred pesos but by a whopping P20,655.97! Pia M. Cinco wrote that "since 2001, I have been protesting a P20,655.97 water bill presented to me under the new name E.M. Ejercito. I occupied an apartment, Unit C, 1450 Union, Paco in 1995, and since my occupancy, my water bills were under the name E. M. Ejercito. They ran to about P400 to P500 monthly. From January to October 2001, I was billed P40 for average consumption. I complained to Arroceros and the collector assigned to me at that time regarding the two issues (the change to Ejercito and the average billing).

"No action was taken. After many calls and trips to the office at Arroceros, I was shown a recomputed bill of P5,614.72. They required me to pay the P5,614.72 so the P20,655.97 will be dropped.

"Though unconvinced about their basis, I paid the recomputed amount (in check) on August 2003. Since my payment, the monthly bill I receive shows a deduction of P5,614.72 from the P20,655.97, indicating that there is a balance, with a disconnection notice, besides. I didn't stop my protest, my trips to Arroceros kept me away from my patient, my bed-ridden husband. The people answering my phone calls told me that the personnel involved in the previous transactions are no longer around. Many times people from Maynilad came to our residence, ready to cut the service. I showed them all the proofs of the valid protest and they respected my stand. Thank God!

"My crusade against these injustices came to a halt when my husband died in 2003. The history of my case is in the hands of the head of Customer Services in Arroceros. I told her I won't stop fighting because I did not consume the water represented by that bill. Tenants have come and gone out of the building, and they might have left their bills unpaid. Why slap the unpaid bills on a tenant who pays her own bills religiously? I paid my last bill on June 27, 2006 (P2,102.02) after I had a talk with the head of Customer Services. I hope this case is laid to rest. I believe there are other customers like Mr. Sena and me. Don't you think so?"

I believe there are many more of them. Some still don't realize that they are being victimized. Those who do, speak up!

Right-doing

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I'M STILL OVERWHELMED BY ARCHBISHOP Ramon Arguelles' comment that "everybody cheated in the last elections anyway, some merely lost in the cheating." I got to thinking about it a little more deeply, only to get a lot more dismayed.

At the very least, it's not true at all. I did not see Raul Roco cheat in the last elections. He was so finicky about accepting donations from people and demanded much idealism from potential supporters. He pissed off those who were asking explicitly or implicitly "What's in it for me?" and berated them. I did not see "Brother Eddie" Villanueva cheat in the last elections. He too conducted a fairly high-minded campaign appealing to the virtuous and promising moral regeneration.

I do not know how the campaigns of Fernando Poe Jr. and Panfilo Lacson went. I was not privy to them. I leave it to their camps to debate Arguelles' contention.

The only one I saw—and heard—cheat was GMA. She was the one who gave fertilizer funds away, courtesy of an agriculture undersecretary aptly named Joc-Joc, to local officials who desperately needed only the kind of fertilizer that encouraged growth of scruples. She was the only one who personally, repeatedly and insistently called up Garci to make sure she won by one million votes over FPJ.

But more than the lack of factual basis of Arguelles' contention, there is its lack of moral principle. That contention of course is nothing new. I've heard it alike from GMA's supporters and from sectors of a public grown cynical. "*Lahat naman sila mandaraya.*" (Everyone is a cheat.)

It's a variation of what every crook in government, civilian and military, says when he is caught with his hands in the cookie jar. "*Hindi lang naman ako ang magnanakaw.*" (I'm not the only thief in this country.) That was what Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia said when he was being hounded for spiriting away "gifts" from contractors. That's what Erap said about the past presidents when he was being hounded for corruption. The past presidents, he suggested, were bigger crooks. Indeed, his tormentor, Chavit Singson, invented crookedness. He was probably right on both counts.

But you grant that perfidy is rife, why should that naturally lead to the conclusion, "Let's just accept it" or worse, "Let's just reward the best cheat or thief of them all"? The fact that others have committed the same crime, or worse, does not make one innocent, it only makes the others equally guilty. The fact that iniquity is rife is not an invitation to be more lenient, it is a compulsion to be stricter. The fact that "everybody does it" cannot make us want to tolerate it, it can only make us want to stop it.

The proposition that a general and worsening condition of wrongdoing justifies more wrongdoing rather than demands right-doing is an engraved invitation to moral anarchy. But for some strange reason, that proposition seems to count for much in these parts. For some strange reason, we find it easier to emulate vice than virtue, stupidity than wisdom. For some strange reason, we find it easier to throw ourselves off a cliff like lemmings because everyone's doing it rather than step back and ask ourselves why in God's name anyone would want to do it.

You see that easily in street life. Some idiot usurps the opposite lane to get ahead of a long queue in traffic, and instead of those who have fallen in line sending curses in his direction, they trail him like a magnet.

It's absolute madness and it's time we changed our mind-sets completely, with or without the aid of our bishops.

Even if we accept the proposition that everybody usurps the opposite lane, which has no factual basis since more vehicles are in line than out of it, why should we conclude that it is all right to usurp lanes and let's just reward those who do? Even if we accept the proposition that everybody steals, which does have factual basis in government, finding an honest soul in it today poses more problems than Lot had with Sodom and Gomorrah, why should we conclude that it is all right to steal, and let's just fry the small fry and let the big ones get away?

Even if we accept that every candidate cheats in elections, and that has no factual basis, too, since more presidential candidates in the last elections did not cheat than did, why should we conclude that it is all right to cheat in elections and give glory to Gloria?

Why shouldn't our attitude instead be: Everybody's usurping the opposite lane of streets, why don't we line the errant drivers up the side of the street, or against the wall, whichever is the more terrifying, and fine them steeply, or allow traffic cops to extort from them, whichever will put the fear of God and traffic in them? Every government official steals, why don't we submit their names to all the robbers, kidnappers and con men in this country so they would gain profound insights into the meaning of being fleeced? (At this point, I'm even willing to unleash Alfredo Lim with the mandate to paint the houses of the crooks red, if not seal their occupants in metal drums and float them in the Pasig, with the sign, "*Magnanakaw: Huwag tularan.*"

Everybody cheats in elections, why not jail the worst of them, notably the one that would stop at nothing, including kidnapping, to win? Why not replace the innumerate election commissioners with those who know how to count? Why not fly in an international group of observers, and fill the Comelec office with all sorts of bugs duly approved by judges so that none of the commissioners could so much as break wind without it registering on the surveillance Richter scale?

In short, everybody does wrong in this country, why not stop it and do right for a change? Or is the "everybody" so literal, so absolute, so total, there's nobody left to do a thing about it?

Fiction behind withdrawal of support

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

IN THE HISTORY OF COUPS IN THIS COUNTRY since 1986, military interventions have been justified by the term "withdrawal of support" from an elected government. This term has served to disguise military action aimed at toppling a regime as an outright power grab in the classical coup style, without violence. It was successfully used as a cover for the extra-constitutional ouster of President Joseph Estrada in Edsa II in January 2001. Since then, it has become the excuse behind which groups conspiring to stage coups have sought cover. The success of the "withdrawal of support" from Estrada by the military chain of command, led by then Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Angelo Reyes, became the inspiration of Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, when he announced his withdrawal of support from President Macapagal-Arroyo in a videotape planned for broadcast on Feb. 24, 2006 to mobilize mass support behind the oust-Arroyo campaign.

The broadcast of the video on ABS-CBN has raised two issues, both with very dangerous implications for electoral democracy and for polarizing citizens. The first issue concerns the tendentious argument that a call by military officers to withdraw support from a constitutional government is not a coup attempt. Therefore, by implication, the call is not illegal and not a treasonous act. The other issue, a pernicious one, puts Lim on a pedestal as a "patriot" for calling for a withdrawal of support. It is argued that those who conspired with and supported Lim belonged to a special class of "patriotic" citizens who should be emulated by the rest of the citizens rather than prosecuted for engaging in a plot to overthrow government.

Two things make this argument onerous: First, political activists well known as avid campaigners for the ouster of Ms Arroyo have appointed themselves to set the standard of patriotism for Filipinos. Second, the patriotism of Filipinos is now being put to a test of citizenship according to the political values of a noisy group whose political agenda is not beyond reproach. This argument affronts Filipinos who don't like "super-patriots" giving them lectures on love of country. They don't want to be led by the nose to join stampedes driven by an intolerant few. The more this deceitful argument is pushed, the more Filipinos will be insulted and be alienated from drives calling for withdrawal of support.

In the aftermath of the broadcast of Lim's video, some members of Congress have called for a legislative inquiry to determine whether withdrawal of support is a crime. It has been cited, in support of the argument that withdrawal of support is not a crime, that Reyes, former Defense Minister Juan Ponce Enrile and Gen. Fidel V. Ramos were not punished for withdrawing support from Estrada, in the case of Reyes, and President Marcos, in the case of Enrile and Ramos.

We are being offered a facetious argument that glosses over events that took place as a result of these withdrawals. Enrile's and Ramos' defection set in train events that led to the collapse of the Marcos regime. Reyes' withdrawal precipitated the collapse of the Estrada administration. Once the Armed Forces and the police defect, a government's foundation crashes. The resignation of key Cabinet members does not bring down a government, as shown by the defection of the "Hyatt 10" from the Arroyo Cabinet in July 2005. So, the wool is being pulled before our eyes when people argue that coups don't happen when some messianic generals call for withdrawal of support. This argument takes us for idiots.

The consequences—collapse of governments—of the Enrile, Ramos and Reyes defections were certainly not lost on Lim when he taped his incendiary broadcast. Lim is not naïve. He prepared and planned to march with Col. Ariel Querubin and his Marines to join their civilian cohorts in a political rally at the Makati business district in which he would broadcast his melodramatic proclamation. Lim knew in the charged atmosphere of that rally, his announcement could spark a mass movement that would precipitate the fall of the Arroyo regime.

One anti-Arroyo activist appointed himself as legal mentor of Lim and told him that withdrawal of support was not a crime but a "patriotic" act. Lim did not need that advice. He knew what the consequence of his video proclamation would be: a coup by collapse of government, and not by an armed attack such as the one he led against the Aquino administration in 1989.

The failure of the 1989 coup taught Lim the valuable lesson that an armed power grab would get no public support and would have little chance of success. That's why he settled last February for a less offensive option: withdrawal of support.

Even if the 1986 and 2001 military defections were non-violent, the result was a coup just the same. The result boiled down to the extra-constitutional ouster of elected regimes by coup plots anchored on military intervention.

In the welter of rationalization and in the search for justifications for involvement in conspiracies to topple the government, it is convenient to ignore an important fact: Enrile, Ramos and Reyes were not punished because their withdrawal of support was successful. Because of their success, they wrote the terms of settlement. Thus, they emerged as the heroes. If they had failed, they would have been executed by firing squad as scoundrels.

Since the February coup plot failed, Lim and his civilian cohorts, including his legal mentors, face a different fate. Losers never get to define patriotism.

Young people's risks

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

"YOUTH" IS THE THEME OF THIS YEAR'S world Population Day, which is timely since there are more young people in the world today than ever before, and their lives "present a wide range of educational, family, employment, and health experiences that depart in major ways from those of youth one or generations ago."

In other words, it's no use using this generation of parents' experiences to deal with the experiences of our children.

In the latest issue of Bridge, published by the Population Reference Bureau, the difference in experiences can be attributed to "the effects of globalization, technological advances, and widespread economic development."

Young people today "spend a longer time in school, begin work at a later age, and get married and have children later than their counterparts did 20 years ago." In general, wrote Rachel Nugent in the article "Youth in a Global World," "modern youth spend (a) longer (time) preparing for adulthood than their parents."

Among the challenges that young people face as they make their way to adulthood are numerous health risks, "many of which will affect the length and quality of their lives." Foremost among these risks is HIV/AIDS, which is increasingly afflicting young people, especially young women, in the developing world. Other potential risks to health to which young people are especially vulnerable are alcohol, tobacco and road accidents. "Early sexual activity and early childbearing also have long-term effects on quality of life," writes Nugent.

How are these health risks and challenges best addressed? Nugent says the best approach would be "through multisectoral strategies that respond to the varying social and economic circumstances that different youth experience today."

* * *

PART of the vulnerability of young people is their penchant for risk taking, which is part and parcel of growing up, with "experimentation and exploration" playing a big role in a young person's voyage to maturity.

The problem is, notes Nugent, "youth commonly underestimate the risk of disease, accident, or vulnerability, and they often lack knowledge about the consequences of their actions—thereby exposing themselves to serious health problems."

In particular, "the impact of HIV/AIDS on youth cannot be underestimated." The disease "affects their family situation, their economic circumstances and prospects, their health and well-being, and even their social behavior as they negotiate sexual and intimate behavior in the age of AIDS." Sadly, comprehensive knowledge of HIV risk remains low among young people, as borne out in surveys worldwide, including in the Philippines.

A high-risk group especially vulnerable to delivery complications and long-term health problems due to early pregnancy and childbirth are young women ages 15-19, who are far less likely to use modern contraceptives than women in the early 20s, even if increasing numbers of them are becoming sexually active. "Lack of access to desired family planning methods remains especially high among the poorer and less-educated segment of the population in developing countries," writes Nugent. And with Filipino Catholic bishops insisting on their prerogative to censor the content of sex education modules for public schools, we can count on even more poor young women ending up barefoot and pregnant and minimally educated.

* * *

TOGETHER with other members of the media, I was privileged to be invited last Monday to a dinner for seven government officials from the Bangladesh Ministry of Information as well as from UNFPA Bangladesh who are here for a five-day study tour.

Hosted by outgoing UNFPA Country Director Zahidul Huque, the dinner was actually meant to be a discussion and sharing of experiences between the Bangladeshi delegation and the local media. True enough, we found many things in common, not just as media practitioners but also as Bangladeshis and Filipinos. When I mentioned that they had just missed a typhoon, Nikesh Amit, communications officer of UNFPA Bangladesh, replied that it was fine by them since they were used not just to typhoons but even to tornadoes in their country!

About half the time, though, was spent with us Filipinos giving the visitors a guided "tour" through the shopping meccas of Metro Manila, with Cheche Lazaro of "The Probe Team" as team leader. The visitors seemed most interested in the Greenhills *tiangge*, especially after we mentioned the great bargains to be found in the stalls of the pearl vendors. We lobbied vigorously with the UNFPA staff to make sure to give our Bangladeshi friends some time for shopping and sight-seeing—not only for their own pleasure, but also to perk up the local economy!

* * *

HOSTING the dinner for the Bangladeshi delegation, held at the Museum Café of the Ayala Museum, was one of the last activities in the Philippines of Dr. Huque, who is ending his four-year assignment in the country this month.

Last Friday, the UNFPA hosted a farewell dinner for him, a dinner marked by, in typical Filipino fashion, lots of singing, testimonials and dancing. Testimony to the fondness with which Filipinos hold Dr. Huque was the number of people in attendance, among them government officials (including Socioeconomic Planning Secretary Romy Neri who delivered a heartfelt song number), representatives of the United Nations community in Manila, members of the diplomatic corps, the media, civil society and academe.

Pretty obvious was the closeness between the staff of the local UNFPA office and Dr. Huque, whom the staffers fondly called "Tatay Zahid." Hopefully, even after he takes up his new posting in Indonesia, the ties between Huque and the Philippines will prove enduring and fruitful.

Rizal's version of a famous folk tale

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

EVERY YEAR, ON THE THIRD TUESDAY OF JULY, we celebrate National Children's Book Day. This has been around for quite some time, and it is quite encouraging to note that we are producing a significant number of children's books. These are wonderfully illustrated and if not for our Third World budget, we could probably make it big internationally.

There was a time when parents had little or no Philippine children's books. Now we do, and that is reason to celebrate.

Yesterday, National Library Director Prudenciana Cruz opened a children's library which it is hoped will encourage young people to read and later use other materials conserved in the National Library.

When the Philippine Board of Books for Young People, whose previous board members include National Artists Lucrecia Kasilag (now honorary chair) and Virgilio Almario, was established three decades ago, they celebrated International Children's Book Day on Hans Christian Andersen's birthday. Later on, the celebration was reset to the third Tuesday of July because it was on a Tuesday in July 1889 when a Philippine folktale was published in London in Trubner's Record. That folk tale was the all-too familiar "Ang Buhay ni Pagong at ni Matsing," and the storyteller who brought our tale to the West was none other than Jose Rizal.

Rizal's English was quite passable, and I presume his text was edited before it was printed. He not only related the familiar story, but he also compared this with a similar Japanese folk tale and even went into some literary and anthropological analysis.

We also know that Rizal drew in *komiks* form the same tale in the scrap book of Paz Pardo de Tavera, the ill-fated wife of Juan Luna. A year ago, Reni Roxas of Tahanan Books had the Rizal drawings scanned (the originals are unlocated, so all we have is a clear copy in Austin Craig's 1913 biography, "Life Lineage and Labors of Jose Rizal") and then digitally enhanced and colored. Since Rizal wrote the text in Spanish, she used the Trubner's Record version and came up with a superb children's book.

While we have heard and read many versions of the "The Monkey and the Turtle," it's best we get the story straight from Rizal himself:

"The tortoise and the monkey found once a banana tree floating amidst the waves of a river. It was a very fine tree, with large green leaves, and with roots, just as if it had been pulled off by a storm. They took it ashore.

"'Let us divide it,' said the tortoise, 'and plant each its portion.' They cut it in the middle, and the monkey, as the stronger, took for himself the upper part of the tree thinking that it would grow quicker for it had leaves. The tortoise, as the weaker, had the lower part, that looked ugly, although it had roots. After some days, they met.

"'Hallo Mr. Monkey,' said the Tortoise, 'how are you getting on with your banana tree?'

"'Alas,' answered the monkey, 'it has been dead a long time! And yours, Miss Tortoise?'

"'Very nice indeed, with leaves and fruits. Only I cannot climb up, to gather them.'

"'Never mind,' said the malicious monkey, 'I will climb and pick them for you.'

"'Do, Mr. Monkey,' replied the tortoise gratefully. And so they walked towards the tortoise's house As soon as the monkey saw the bright yellow fruits hanging between the large green leaves, he climbed up and began plundering, munching and gobbling, as quick as he could.

"'But give me some too,' said the tortoise, seeing that the monkey did not take the slightest notice of her.

"'Not even a bit of the skin, if it is eatable,' rejoined the monkey, both his cheeks crammed with bananas.

"The tortoise meditated revenge. She went to the river, picked up some pointed snails, planted them around the banana tree, and hid himself (*sic*) under a cocoa-nut (*sic*) shell. When the monkey came down, he hurt himself and began to bleed. After a long search, he found the tortoise.

"'You wretched creature, here you are!' said he. 'You must pay now for your wickedness; you must die. But as I am very generous, I will leave you to your choice of your death. Shall I pound you in a mortar, or shall I throw you in the water? Which do you prefer?'

"'The mortar, the mortar,' answered the tortoise. 'I am so afraid of getting drowned.'

"'O, ho!' Laughed the monkey. 'Indeed! You are afraid of getting drowned! Now I will drown you.'

"And, going to the shore, he slung the tortoise and threw it in the water.

"But soon the tortoise reappeared swimming and laughing at the deceived, artful monkey."

My critics says I'm childish, not child-like. However, when I read through the Rizal text and go over his illustrated version of this famous folk tale, I cannot imagine the turtle hiding under a coconut shell unless it was very small or the coconut shell was extraordinarily large.

Despite all this, I'm glad I can still suspend disbelief and enjoy the tale as much as Rizal loved narrating it. At least in this story, Rizal kept his anti-Spanish and anti-clerical bent in check. But in the familiar tale of Mariang Maquiling, he put a different twist, which will be the subject of a future column. Someone should mine Rizal's writings for all the folk tales transmitted orally that he captured in the written word.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Breast is best

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

THE ADVANTAGES OF BREASTMILK ARE LEGION, BUT I can summarize them in one sentence: It's free, it offers complete and superior nutrition, it provides protection against many diseases and health disorders.

Yet many Filipino couples choose to bottle-feed their infants. Sometimes the reason is that the mother has to return to work, and is unaware that she can refrigerate her breastmilk and have it given to the child. More often though, Filipino couples think that infant formula is superior to breastfeeding, and spend hard-earned money—up to P1,000 a week—on the milk powder. The reason is simple: they're victims of the relentless marketing campaigns of the milk companies.

The marketing campaigns could be even worse if it were not for the Milk Code, whose 20th anniversary we should be celebrating this year, given that it has saved the lives of countless children by regulating the promotion of infant formula.

Signed on Oct. 20, 1986 as Health Department Administrative Order 51, the Milk Code went by a mouthful of a full name: the National Code of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes, Breastmilk Supplements, and Related Products. These breastmilk substitutes are more popularly known as "infant formula" although that term is not very accurate since "infant" refers to children aged 1 and below, while the breastmilk substitutes and supplements are available for children above the age of 1.

Twenty years after that law was passed, the health department has issued Administrative Order 2006-0012 with new Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR). The department should be praised for the new IRR, as it clamps down on new forms of reckless marketing of the breastmilk substitutes.

Revolutionary

Before 1986, there was no law regulating the promotion of breastmilk substitutes. It was a chaotic situation, with all kinds of marketing gimmicks for infant formula. The most notorious were the sales agents who would station themselves in hospitals, giving out free samples to mothers who had just delivered, and convincing them that the infant formula was better than breastfeeding. One mother told me she was told that she couldn't breastfeed because her breasts were too small. That's complete nonsense: breast size has nothing to do with breastmilk production.

The marketing was so effective that as early as the 1970s, I'd find infant formula in the *sari-sari* stores of the most remote villages, sold with those other blights of "civilization": cigarettes and soft drinks. Filipinos were convinced that infant formula was modern and healthy while breastfeeding was old-fashioned and inferior.

Local consumer and health groups joined a global campaign against the milk companies' marketing strategies. The groups pointed out that the infant formula, besides depriving babies of the benefits of breastmilk, was also killing babies. Because it was expensive, parents would use less powder, which resulted in the infants' under-nutrition. In other cases, parents would prepare the infant formula with dirty water, which would result in severe diarrhea for the infants.

But under the Marcos dictatorship, the campaign to regulate infant formula moved slowly. The milk companies were all huge multinationals and exerted political clout that effectively barred attempts at regulation.

After the Edsa Revolt, health groups used the new democratic space to campaign for public health reforms. The new health department, under Dr. Alfredo Bengzon, was more receptive to these reforms and one of the early victories was the passage of the Milk Code.

The Milk Code was revolutionary in the way it regulated advertising, and required all ads to state: "Breastmilk is best for babies." The milk manufacturers and advertising companies protested, but the Code pushed through. Later, a Rooming In Law was to be passed, requiring hospitals to keep the newborn infant with the mother as soon as the child was born so breastfeeding could be initiated.

Backsliding

Alas, through the years, there's been a noticeable backsliding in the implementation of the Milk Code. Milk companies aren't as aggressive in maternity wards, but they're still able to get hospitals to distribute free booklets to new mothers, supposedly so they can record milestones in their newborn child's life, but each page carries blurbs for an infant formula product.

The promotions have become aggressive with pediatricians and other health professionals but the worst effects come from advertising. The ads state that breastmilk is still best, but the token declaration is drowned out by all kinds of wild claims for the breastmilk substitutes. If we are to believe the manufacturers, we'd be a nation of geniuses and child prodigies.

The new IRR, which take effect this month, cracks the whip on these promotions. These new moves are not arbitrary, they're based on the recommendations of experts from the World Health Organization and Unicef that are stated in the IRR, among others:

First, exclusive breastfeeding, without any food supplements, is still best for infants from birth to 6 months.

Second, there is no substitute for breastmilk. The ones that are marketed can only approximate breastmilk, but can never be a complete replacement.

Third, breastfeeding remains appropriate for young children up to the age of 24 months, or beyond.

Fourth, infant or milk formula can be hazardous to a child's health.

Cows and humans

Invoking these principles, the health department has a number of rules and regulations to promote breastfeeding and to regulate the sales and marketing of the infant formula. There are quite a number of prohibitions, one of the most striking being an "absolute" prohibition on "all health and nutrition claims for products within the scope of the Code," including "any phrase or words that connote to increase emotional, intellectual abilities of the infant and young child." Let's see if such offending ads are pulled out now.

"Financial and material inducements" to promote the breastmilk substitutes are prohibited not just for health workers but also for members of the workers' families. Manufacturers are also prohibited from giving "gifts of any sort" to "any member of the general public, to hospitals and other health facilities."

I have to say I'm very impressed with the IRR, but worry about its implementation. Penalties for violations are fairly light, consisting of two months to one year imprisonment, and/or fines of P1,000 to P30,000, loose change for the companies.

Perhaps on our own then, as we stumble along with the present economic and political crisis, we might want to make a difference with the health and nutrition of children. There's much that needs to be done to promote breastfeeding, even as we become more vigilant about the ads and marketing campaigns. A catchy slogan to remember from the 1970s: Cow's milk is best for cows, human breastmilk is best for humans.

LETTERS

Red tape, outdated processes at BOC

IF ANYONE WONDERS WHY THIS COUNTRY is getting nowhere, here's a good example of how totally inadequate and outdated procedures, coupled with lots of red tape, can lay even the best of intentions to waste.

Last year, I imported two windmills for our beach house in Batangas. The customs clearing procedure was already an exercise in red tape and frustration. Then a typhoon felled one of these windmills. This was not supposed to happen according to the manufacturer's warranty. So, the felled windmill was replaced free of charge.

The replacement has been with the Bureau of Customs for more than a month now; and for how long more, it is not certain. At one point in this saga, nobody could deal with the shipment because the customs commissioner was out of the country and no deputy had been assigned to attend to the shipment. All the while hundreds of shipments are stuck in customs custody and "unacted" upon by the bureau, conveniently accruing vast amounts of storage fees.

I just came back from Singapore where their ultra-modern harbor operates on a 24/7 basis. There, scenarios like the one described above are not tolerated for a single day.

The essence of this story here is very simple: You want to progress as a country in these ever-changing, modern times, you will have to provide the administrative structures in which this progress can happen. If you let the people within the Bureau of Customs decide, they will forever cling to their well-protected turfs with lots of red tape, corruption and privileges for a favored few, while the rest of the country goes down the drain.

One wonders, how a single, backward-minded entity in a country is allowed to subvert the rules of the GATT agreement, to which the Philippines is a signatory. These days the whole world is a gigantic department store, where people can buy goods via the Internet. But here, people find out that the goods, when they reach Philippine shores, enter the Medieval Age.

For as long as the customs system is allowed to only serve the ends of its corrupt officials and not that of the nation, no real progress will happen here.

—ULRICH BOSSE,
28 Judith St.,
Vermont Royale Executive Village,
Barrio Mayamot, Antipolo, Rizal

Students support PNU professors' resignation

THE ALYANSA NG KABATAAN PARA SA BAYAN (Akbayan-PNU) strongly denounces the latest threat of Lutgardo Barbo to impose disciplinary actions on the leaders who spearheaded the student rally last July 7.

The controversy over Barbo's appointment as president of the Philippine Normal University will not be resolved by stifling the students' right to assembly and expression. Akbayan-PNU members are very disappointed with the Board of Regents' decision which ignored the clamor of the PNU community for a transparent and accountable process in the selection of PNU president.

We worry that the PNU, as an institution, suffers in this controversy, in which the students can only lose. As an institution of teaching excellence, the PNU has already been diminished by the mass resignation of our professors. Nevertheless, we believe in their principled stand to oppose the Search Committee's "manipulated" decision.

A university where dissenting opinions are not heard has no right to be called a university. The PNU has always been an academic institution that lives up to its duty. The duty of the institution is to produce teachers of quality and excellence. Producing teachers who are not trained to do critical thinking would spell further disaster for our deteriorating educational system.

We call on our fellow students to break their silence and never allow the Search Committee's malicious and erroneous decision to cripple our academic rights. We are "iskolar ng bayan" and, soon, will be "guro ng bayan." We owe it to our country and our people to promote critical thinking, uphold the progressive tradition of the university and help bring forth education reform.

—GERALD MARCELO,
Alyansa ng Kabataan para sa Bayan
(Akbayan-Philippine Normal University),
akbayan.pnu@gmail.com

Ultramodern theater, 'Jurassic' ticketing system

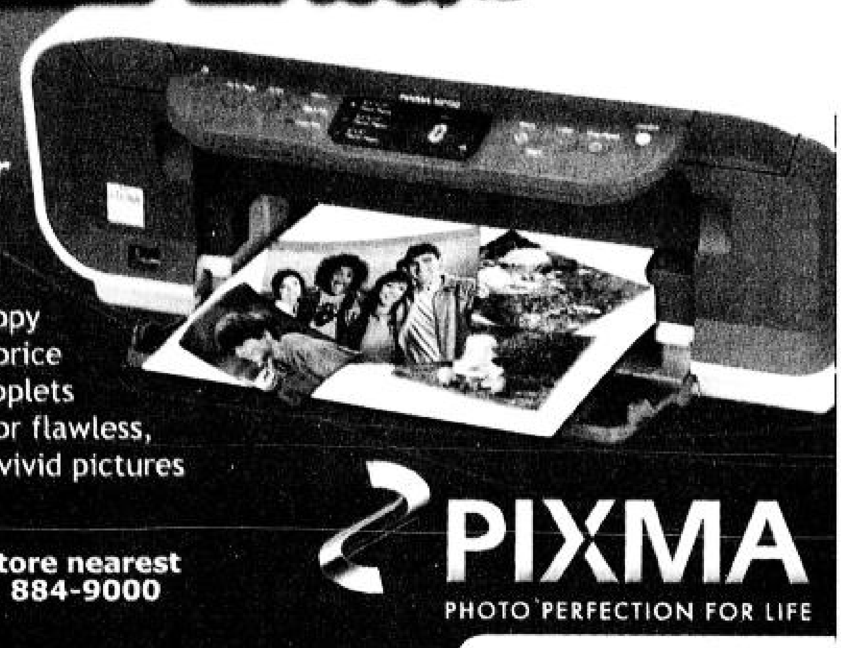
IT'S FANTASTIC TO FINALLY HAVE AN IMAX theater in Manila. But for all the hype, its ticketing system is horrendous.

Last July 1, we visited the IMAX at SM Mall of Asia to buy tickets to the movie "Superman Returns." Predictably, there were hordes of people queuing for tickets—after all, this was a much-awaited movie. What we weren't expecting was the length of time (three hours) we had to spend to get our tickets.

For a theater that's supposed to be a state-of the-art marvel, its ticketing system is probably 20 years behind. Cinemas like Glorietta 4, Greenbelt 3 and others already have monitors that let ticket buyers know, on real-time basis, which seats are still vacant. This gives viewers time to decide on their options when it's finally their turn to buy tickets. Some even have websites and hotlines that work. IMAX sadly doesn't have any of these. Just getting someone to answer the phone is next to impossible. Imagine the trip you have to take to get to the end of Edsa and then go through a tortuous wait at the box office.

Shouldn't the IMAX's owners pay for an interactive website and a good ticketing system? If one's going to open something big, I think he/she should do it right.

—ERIC ZALDARRIAGA,
ericlz68@msn.com



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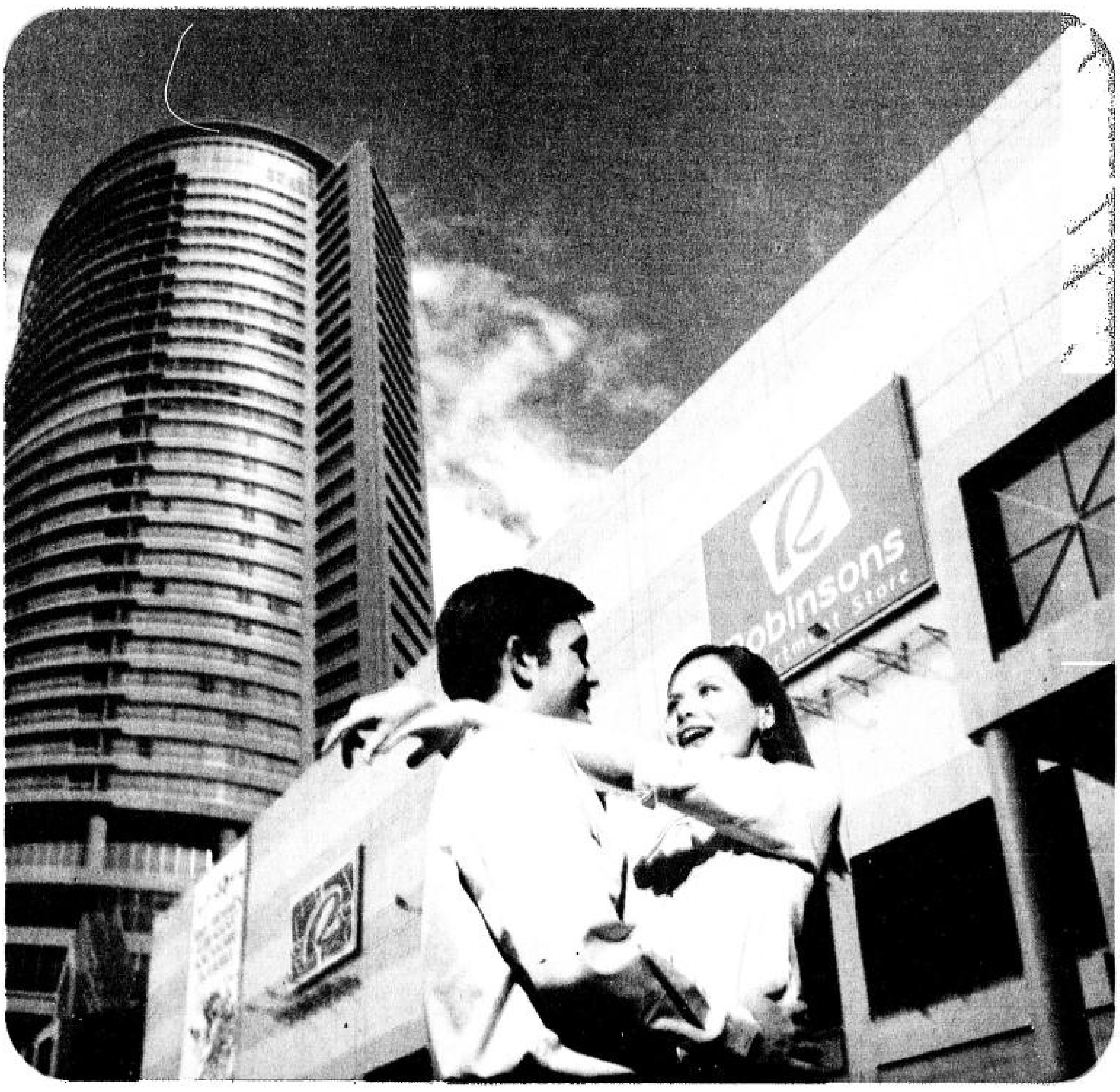

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Veggie shortage feared after 'Florita'

PROTESTERS throw away rotting vegetables during a recent rally against vegetable importation at the Department of Agriculture office in Quezon City.

JOAN BONDOC/PDI PHOTO

By Delmar Cariño
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LA TRINIDAD, BENGUET—VEGETABLES HAVE STARTED TO ARRIVE in trickles at the trading post here but farmers and agriculture officials expressed fears of a shortage and dismay over fluctuating prices.

The damage caused by Typhoon "Florita" on the province's vegetable farms and tons of harvested vegetables that could rot if undelivered on time at the trading post could trigger the shortage, said Lolita Bentres, provincial agriculturist.

Bentres placed the damage to farms swamped by strong rains accompanying Florita at P101.8 million as of July 18. She said the figure could still go up as only the vegetable producing towns of La Trinidad, Buguias and Mankayan had completed their reports on crop losses.

Delivery trucks started arriving here as two sections of the Halsema Highway along Barangays Caliking and Calasipan in Atok, Benguet were cleared of debris and opened to traffic.

Bentres said the isolation of major vegetable producing areas, like Barangay Madaymen in Kibungan, could worsen the impact on local vegetable supply.

Madaymen is considered a major supplier in the industry as it produces 30 to 50 tons a day of carrots, potatoes and cabbages from 3,000 hectares of agricultural land.

"I am appealing to the authorities to please restore our only road as more than 1,000 farmers and their families would starve if they could not bring their produce to the market," said Homer Teliaken, president of the Madaymen Farmers Association.

A 200-meter portion of the village's only access to the national highway became impassable last week when it eroded at the height of the typhoon's onslaught.

Fifty vegetable trucks arrived at the trading post on Saturday but vegetable traders for Metro Manila bound markets complained that most of the harvested products were "second class."

Second class vegetables are those that have been stored and unsold for a few days, forcing traders to lower their buying price.

These types of vegetables are cheaper than "first class" vegetables, or newly harvested crops, brought directly to the market for trading.

Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) crews have been working round the clock since last week to open the heavily damaged portion of Halsema Highway along Sitio Pakpaldian in Barangay Amgaleyguey in Buguias. *With a report from Maurice Malanes, PDI N. Luzon Bureau*

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ROUNDUP

Suspected reb wounded in ambush

CAMP CONRADO YAP, Zambales—A suspected communist rebel was wounded after a 10-minute gun battle between the breakaway rebel Rebolusyonaryong Hukbong Bayan (RHB) and the police in Barangay Inhobol in Masinloc town on Sunday. Chief Insp. Dario Menor, 314th PNP Mobile Force director, said no policeman was hurt in the gunfight. He said a pursuit operation led to the discovery of a rebel camp in a remote area in Masinloc. ***Cesar Villa, PDI Central Luzon Desk***

NPA rebs kill 1 in Antique

ILOILO CITY—Suspected New People's Army (NPA) rebels shot dead a resident of a hinterland village in San Remigio, Antique at around 3:30 p.m. Friday. Sammy Puyong died of multiple bullet wounds in the chest in Barangay Osorio in San Remigio, 21 km northeast of the capital town of San Jose. The Antique Provincial Police Office said Puyong , a resident of Barangay Aringalan in the same town, was with his two brothers when they were accosted by at least 15 heavily armed men believed to be NPA rebels operating in the area. The suspects took Puyong away from his brothers before he was shot dead. The two were left unharmed. The suspects reportedly accused Puyong of being a military informer but his brothers denied the claim. ***Nestor Burgos Jr., PDI Visayas Bureau***

60 get gov't lot certificates

SIXTY beneficiaries of the Southville housing project in Cabuyao, Laguna, representing some 7,000 beneficiaries, recently received their certificates of lot allocation from the government, according to a press release. The awarding was led by Vice President Noli de Castro, also Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council chair, and National Housing Authority General Manager Federico Laxa. De Castro also led in the turnover of 3,500 packages of school supplies and donation of a patrol car. The NHA has built 20 classrooms in the relocation area, while 24 classrooms were being constructed. The Southville Housing Project is a 53-hectare resettlement site in Barangay Niugan, Marinig and Banay-Banay, Cabuyao, Laguna developed for families displaced by the clearing of the Philippine National Railways right-of-way in Manila, Makati and Cabuyao.

Laguna gov's security escort killed

CAMP VICENTE LIM, Laguna—A security aide of Laguna Gov. Teresita "Ningning" Lazaro was gunned down by a co-worker in Bay, Laguna a few minutes before he was to escort the convoy of the governor on Monday morning. Laguna police director Senior Supt. Luisito de Leon said Bonifacio Villagracia, 29, assigned at the motorcycle unit of the Laguna Traffic Management Office (LTMO), had just left his house in Barangay San Isidro at around 7:15 a.m. when the lone gunman shot him at least four times on his body, which caused his instantaneous death. Chris Sanji, the provincial information officer, said a witness to the killing had identified a certain Ronaldo Soriano Dinco as the gunman, a neighbor and co-worker of Villagracia. A murder case has been filed before the prosecutor's office in Bay, he said. He added that professional jealousy was being eyed as a motive for the crime. De Leon, however, denied that the victim was Lazaro's security escort. ***Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Residents near cracked mountain ask mayor to evacuate them soon

PANGIL, LAGUNA—Amid a heavy downpour yesterday, residents of Barangay Dambo complained that the relocation of the 61 families directly affected by the possible collapse of the mountain soil has been virtually suspended after their story came out of the INQUIRER.

A statement brought to the INQUIRER by the officers of the Samahang Pinagpala said: "We read in your (Philippine) Daily Inquirer that we are against the idea of evacuating or leaving our homes to a safe place. This is not true and we are here to express our willingness to leave immediately to avoid the fatal catastrophe."

The group was referring to the story in the INQUIRER's July 17th issue saying that despite warnings from government geologists and efforts of local officials to move them to safe grounds, some residents of the village who might be affected by the loosening of the mountain soil were reluctant to abandon their homes.

The story quoted Betty Arozena, a resident, as suggesting that the evacuation should only be during rainy days, adding that many of the houses that might be affected are big and that their occupants had spent large sums of money for their construction and maintenance.

Susana Maalihan, group vice president, said because of the story, Mayor Juanita Manzana confronted them and asked them why they were not leaving their homes.

"The fact is, it was only Arozena who suggested if it would be possible for the evacuation to be only temporary, i.e., only during rainy days but on dry season we should be given the option to return to our respective homes," she said.

"All of us, 61 families, contrary to the report, are willing to evacuate," she added. *Romulo Ponte, PDI S. L. Bureau*

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Farmers accuse soldiers of torture; Army probe up

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

CALINOG, ILOILO—SEVEN FARMERS HAVE accused soldiers of beating them up and committing other forms of torture during military operations in hinterland villages in this town 59.3 km north of Iloilo City last week.

The farmers, accompanied by barangay officials, told reporters and human rights groups here yesterday that soldiers without name patches allegedly detained them from July 12 until the next day.

During the alleged detention, the farmers said they were tied up, repeatedly questioned, forced to admit that they were members of the New People's Army (NPA) and beaten up.

Maj. Lyndon Sollesta, spokesperson of the Army's 3rd Infantry Division, denied that soldiers committed abuses but said that the Army's Task Force Panay would conduct an investigation.

"It was a legitimate operation and none of the residents were beaten up," Sollesta told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview.

Loreto Duerme Jr., 26, said he was on his way to his mother's house in the Masaroy barangay proper, around 15 km from the Calinog Poblacion, when he came upon around 20 soldiers resting along the trail around noon.

The soldiers allegedly grabbed him and asked who he was. He was then tied and blindfolded and later tied to a tree.

He claimed he was repeatedly asked questions and accused of hiding a generator set used by the rebels.

"One of them kicked me in the stomach and then they repeatedly punched me but what will I tell them when I don't know anything that they were asking me about," Duerme said.

5 police officials linked to Batangas syndicate

CALAMBA CITY—MEMBERS OF THE Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) are investigating a top police official and four other senior police officers for allegedly coddling the leaders of an organized crime group in Batangas province, a police official said yesterday.

Supt. Benjamin de los Santos, chief of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Division of the CIDG, said his group had confirmed reports that the erring police officers were protecting the Bantugon Group, a remnant of the dreaded Black Shark Gang.

He said police investigators were now checking reports that the unscrupulous police officers were receiving protection money from the syndicate.

Some of the ranking police officials, are assigned in Batangas, he said.

Mafia

De los Santos said the syndicate, which he described as the "Mafia of the Calabarzon Region," was so well-entrenched that it even had contacts within the judiciary and among politicians.

"That's how a crime syndicate works. Once they let you eat from their plates, they will start asking for favors which the police officers could not turn down," he told the INQUIRER in a mobile phone interview.

De los Santos said intelligence reports had linked the group to numerous criminal activities, such as hijackings, protection rackets, robberies, gunrunning and drug trafficking, but the local police units in the Calabarzon had not conducted operations against its members.

"Are they (Batangas police) just afraid of the group? If they are, then they don't deserve to be in the police force," he said.

Last week, a team of the CIDG and the Special Action Force (SAF) led by De los Santos stormed the alleged safe houses of the Bantugon Group in Batangas City and the towns of Bauan and Mabini.

The early morning raid yielded a cache of high-powered firearms, including AK-47 rifles, submachine guns, M-16 rifles, .45-cal. pistols and other hand guns.

Rich guys

Arrested during the raid were brothers and barangay chairs Arthur and Ronald Blanco, alleged gang leader Nilo Bantugon Jr., and 19 others.

All of the suspects, however, were eventually released after they posted a total bail of P1.25 million.

In an earlier interview, lawyer Joselito Dimayacyac, counsel of Ronald Blanco, strongly denied that his client was a member of the criminal gang.

"He is a barangay captain. Why would he join a crime group?" Dimayacyac argued.

Asked why Blanco had several firearms in his house, he replied: "Blanco was just fond of collecting guns. He never used it for unlawful activities."

Dimayacyac said they were planning to file charges against De los Santos and his men "because they damaged the reputation and personality of my client."

De los Santos said they respected the right of the suspects to post bail.

Suspicious

He, however, said that "the big amount of money that the suspects had after their arrests made their personality even more suspicious."

"Why do they have that amount of cash money? It's precisely because they belong to a syndicate," he said.

De los Santos said they would pursue the charges of illegal possession of firearms that they filed against the suspects despite their release. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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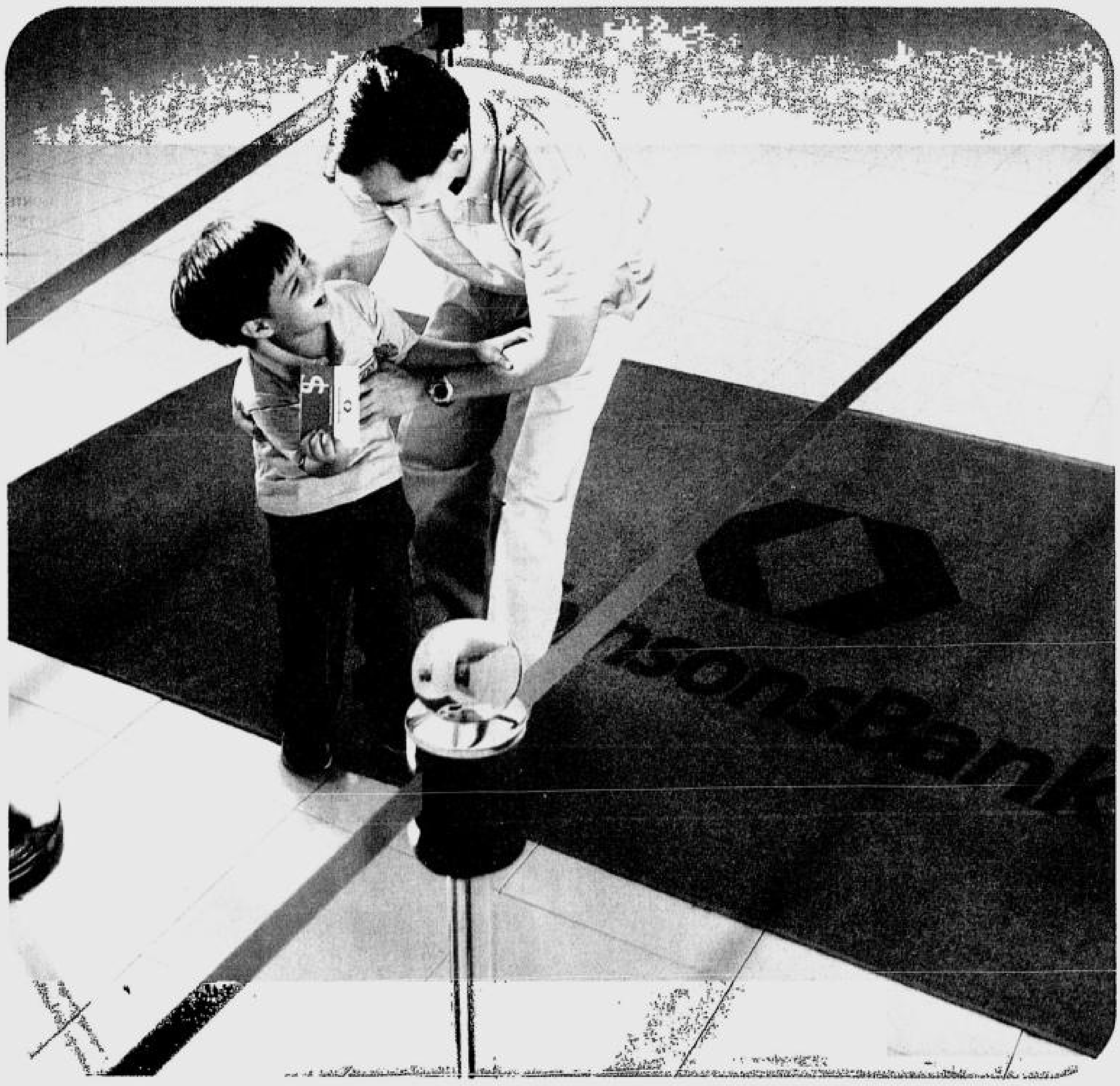

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COTTAGE INDUSTRY EV ESPIRITU/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

A woman places newly harvested fish to dry on a wire mesh in the town of Damortis, La Union where fish drying has become a cottage industry of sorts. Many other households are into drying fish for livelihood.

Sayyaf using teen assassins, says AFP

ZAMBOANGA CITY—THE ABU SAYYAF IS again making its presence felt in Sulu, according to the military.

Brig. Gen. Alexander Aleo, Joint Task Force Comet chief, said four soldiers were killed by the bandit group's liquidation squad, composed mostly of recruits aged 16 to 20 years old, in the past two weeks.

"These trainees are very young. We presume that the ASG (Abu Sayyaf Group) is now tapping young fighters for extortion, harassment and liquidation," Aleo said.

He cited reports saying that the latest recruitment, led by a Muslim convert identified as Joselito Nasara, alias Abu Sofian, was held in the hinterlands of Indanan town.

Capt. Jose Ritchie Pabilonia, information officer of the Southern Command, said two Army soldiers and one Air Force soldier were killed early this month.

Privates First Class Nawali and Sahi of the 35th Infantry Battalion were ambushed and killed in Barangay Tagbak in Indanan on July 1, while Air Force TSgt. Pablito Rabano was shot dead in Barangay Kasalamatan in Jolo.

Edmund Gumbahali, Philippine Information Agency provincial officer, said another soldier, identified only as Faizal from the 9th Field Artillery Battalion, was shot dead in Barangay Alat, Jolo on July 16.

Some witnesses claimed that the killers were "youngsters or teenagers," he said.

"We also suffered two casualties earlier," Senior Supt. Ahirum Ajirim, provincial police chief, said.

He said the victims were shot in the head by motorcycle-riding assailants.

"*Nagpaparamdam lang yan sila* (They're just trying to make their presence felt)," he said of the attacks.

"The ASG is not active in all areas in Sulu. There are some areas where they can operate because they still get support from a minimal mass base, basically in Indanan," Aleo added.

The military, he said, was addressing the problem "by also striking the same approach. We make sure we have the target, then we strike."

Yesterday, two policemen were killed while three others were wounded in an ambush by suspected Abu Sayyaf bandits in Barangay Bualo in Maimbung town.

Ajirim said the victims were responding to a call from the 33rd Infantry Battalion, "for a clearing operation, but along the way, they were greeted with gunfire."

Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau

AFP allots ₱14M to build homes for clash victims

COTABATO CITY—THE MILITARY has set aside at least P14 million to build core shelters for people who lost their houses in recent clashes between militiamen and Moro rebels in Maguindanao.

Brig. Gen. Eduardo Gurrea, chief of the Army's 603rd Infantry Brigade, said the housing project would benefit at least 200 families.

Gurrea said soldiers of the Army's 54th Engineering Brigade would construct the houses, with assistance from Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao Gov. Zaldy Ampatuan.

Engineer Norie Unas, provincial administrator, said the provincial government would also release funds for the project and provide further assistance to evacuees displaced by the fighting.

At least 30,000 people fled from their houses when militiamen, under Gov. Andal Ampatuan's control, stormed a camp of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Shariff Aguak town on June 28.

The militiamen were after two MILF leaders who have been blamed for the June 23 roadside bomb explosion that killed seven people in Shariff Aguak.

The explosion occurred near the public market after Ampatuan's vehicle had just passed by.

Four people riding in a car trailing Ampatuan's were killed.

Two weeks after the clashes started, the governor signed a ceasefire agreement with local MILF leaders.

The displaced residents started to return home last week.

"We are more concerned with the after effects of the conflict, its impact on the individual evacuee and its impact on the image and economy of the province," Unas said.

Gurrea said that aside from building houses, the soldiers would also repair and rehabilitate concrete road networks that were destroyed during the clashes.

They will also install water systems in villages that do not have access to safe drinking water, he said. *Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

ARMM loan share shrinks as result of security issues

DAVAO CITY—THE AUTONOMOUS REGION IN Muslim Mindanao continues to receive the smallest share from microfinancing services because of its unstable peace and order situation, according to Jeffrey Ordoñez, executive director of the Mindanao Microfinance Council (MMC).

Ordoñez said less than one percent, or only three to four of the 49 microfinancing institutions (MFIs), which have registered with the MMC, have reached out to the ARMM.

The ARMM, which is composed of the provinces of Maguindanao, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi, Basilan and Lanao del Sur, is a hotbed of Moro insurgency.

The terror group Abu Sayyaf also operates in some of its provinces.

Ordoñez said unlike the ARMM, other Mindanao areas enjoyed up to 25 percent of the coverage of the MFIs.

He said the seeming reluctance of the MFIs was due to the perception that it was hard to operate in the ARMM, although based on the experience of those who operate in the region, collection is not a problem.

"They registered 90 percent to 100 percent collection rate making microfinancing a lucrative business in the region," he said.

Ordoñez said that aside from first impressions, the MFIs also lack innovations on management, which they had to adopt to fit the needs of households in the ARMM.

He did not elaborate but said he was hoping the MFI coverage in the ARMM would improve soon.

Ordoñez said the MMC has partnered with the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) to assist the MFIs through training programs and seminars to penetrate "hard-to-reach areas" in Mindanao such as the ARMM.

He said the target was to hit 1 million borrowers by 2010, which would be 600,000 higher than the 400,000 borrowers in the past seven years.

In Koronadal City, delegates from Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines started discussing strategies to promote and hasten tourism development in the East Asian Growth Area. *Judy Quiros and Aquiles Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid

1 The Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA), through its Corporate Operating Budget for CY 2006 intends to apply the sum of **PhP 252,000.00** being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF CURRENT TRANSFORMERS FOR THE CAVITE ECONOMIC ZONE**. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

2 The PEZA now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the supply and delivery of the following outdoor use, window type current transformers:

a)	Ratio: 400 : 5A	6 pcs.
b)	Ratio: 600 : 5A	15 pcs.
c)	Ratio: 800 : 5A	21 pcs.
d)	Ratio: 1,200 : 5A	6 pcs.

3. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents ITB.

4 Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," and is restricted to Filipino citizens/sole proprietorships, organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, and to citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last three (3) years with an amount of at least 50% of the ABC and at least five (5) years in the Supply and Delivery of Current Transformers and is able to supply, install and configure the proposed brand. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

5 Interested bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Secretariat and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below.

6 A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders from 19 to 28 July 2006, Mondays to Fridays, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee in the amount of P1,000.00 and submission of a certified copy of their G-EPS Certificate of Registration. The method of payment will be cash basis only. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.

7 The PEZA will hold a Pre-Bid Conference to those who secured the Bidding Documents on 03 August 2006, 2:00 p.m. at the 6th Floor, Social Hall, PEZA Building, Roxas Boulevard corner San Luis St., Pasay City.

8 Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 11:00 a.m. of 16 August 2006. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form of GSIS Surety Bond in the amount of not less than 2.5% of the ABC or in the form of cash, certified check, cashier's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit in the amount of not less than *1% of the ABC*. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

9. Bid opening shall be on 16 August 2006, 2:00 p.m. at the 6th Floor Social Hall, PEZA Bldg., Roxas Blvd corner San Luis St., Pasay City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

10. In case any of the above dates is declared a special non-working holiday, it will automatically be reset on the next working day.

11. The PEZA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

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THE CHAIRMAN
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(PDI—July 19 & 26, 2006)

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
(Re-bid)

The DepED-Bids and Awards Committee (DepED-BAC) invites eligible bidders to apply for eligibility and to bid for Printing and Delivery of the following:

Packages	Item No.	Items Quantity	Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	Pre-Bid Conference	Bid Submission deadline/ Opening of Bids	Venue	End user
A	1	Individual Health Cards (Elementary) 3,000,000 pieces	Php 2,250,000.00	July 25, 2006 2:30 p.m.	August 08, 2006 2:30 p.m.	Bulwagang ng Karunungan DepED Complex, Meralco Ave., Pasig City	Health and Nutrition Center (HNC)
B	1	Individual Health Cards (Secondary) 1,866,667 pieces	Php 1,400,000.00				
	2	Health Examination Cards (Form 86) 50,000 pieces	Php 133,500.00				
	3	Teacher's Oral Health Cards 50,000 pieces	Php 75,000.00				
C	1	Albendazole (1,000,000 Tablets)	Php 5,900,000.00	July 25, 2006 1:30 p.m.	August 08, 2006 1:30 p.m.		

Bids received that exceed the ABC per item shall be rejected.

The Bidding Documents shall be available at the BAC Secretariat, Procurement Service, Room 508, 5th Floor, Mabini Bldg., DepED Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, starting on **July 19, 2006** upon payment in cash of the non-refundable fee of **PhP 2,000.00** for both packages A & B, and another **Php 2,000.00** for package C to the DepED Cashier.

Bidding shall be conducted in accordance with procedures under the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Information is also available at **http://www.deped.gov.ph** or **www.procurementservice.org** or call DepED-PS at telephone no. 636-65-43 or fax no. 636-65-42.

DepED-BAC reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to annul the bidding process, or declare failure of bidding at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected parties.

(Sgd.) **ATTY. CAMILO MIGUEL M. MONTESA**
Assistant Secretary and BAC Chairperson

(PDI—July 19 & 26, 2006)

afp retirement and separation benefits system
Camp General Emilio Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Telephone Nos. 911-4071 to 80

Invitation to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid
Republic of the Philippines
Procurement of Contract for the Construction of the Riviera Residential Estates Underground Electrification and Street Lighting along the Main Road of the complex.

1. The **AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System (AFP-RSBS)**, through the Corporate Budget for the contract approved by the Governing Board intends to apply the sum of **Ninety Four Million Six Hundred Thousand Pesos (Php 94,600,000.00)** Philippine currency, being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) on the **Construction of the Riviera Residential Estates Underground Electrification and Street Lighting along the Main Road of the complex.** Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The AFP-RSBS now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOI) from potential Bidders to apply for eligibility for Construction of the Riviera Residential Estates Underground Electrification and Street Lighting along the Main Road of the complex. Bidders should possess, a valid **PCAB**, category **'AA'** license in General Buildings, **Inter-Agency License Large A Category** for Electrical Works with actual work experience of the type of contract and cost, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least fifty percent (50%) of the ABC, and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the Eligibility Documents. Interested Bidders must submit their LOI's **on or before 5 PM of 26 July 2006 at CMA-C AFP-RSBS Building, 424 Capinpin Ave. Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City** and secure Eligibility Documents therefrom. The applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The deadline for the submission of eligibility requirements is on **9 August 2006 at 5 PM** at the address given below. The Opening of Eligibility Documents shall be on **10 August 2006 at 2 PM** at the **Board Room, AFP-RSBS Building, 424 Capinpin Ave. Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.** Eligibility Documents shall be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend. Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Documents.
3. Bidding shall be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act (RA 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR-A of RA 9184, only Bids from eligible Bidders will be opened. In accordance with IRR-A of RA 9184, a contract will only be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the BAC Secretariat of the AFP-RSBS and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address indicated below.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address shown below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of **Twelve Thousand Five Hundred Pesos (Php12,500.00)** Philippine currency. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the Bidders or his authorized representative on **17 August 2006.**
6. The AFP-RSBS will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on **6 September 2006 at 10 AM** at the **CMA-A AFP-RSBS Building, 424 Capinpin Ave., Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.**
7. Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids at the address shown below **on or before 18 September 2006 at 9 AM, RSBS Board Room.** All Bids must be accompanied by a **Bid Security** in the form of any of the following: cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit issued by a reputable commercial bank, which shall be 1% of ABC or **Nine Hundred Forty Six Thousand Pesos (P946,000.00)** Philippine Currency or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be on **18 September 2006 at 9:05 AM, RSBS Board Room** at the AFP-RSBS Building, 424 Capinpin Ave. Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Bids will be opened in the presence of Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.
8. The AFP-RSBS reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the Bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System
AFP-RSBS Building, 424 Capinpin Ave.
Camp E. Aguinaldo, Quezon City
Tel. Nos. 9114071 loc. 266 / 289 / 281

(Sgd.) BGEN. FRANKLIN C. ACOSTA (Ret)
Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – July 12 & 19, 2006)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Region VII, Cebu City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
TRANSFER OF NFA STOCKS THRU VOYAGE CHARTER

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY, through its *Corporate Budget for 2006* intends to apply the sum of *Two Million One Hundred Twenty Six Thousand Pesos (P2,126,000.00)* being the Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for the Transfer of NFA Stocks thru Voyage Charter of NFA Region 7. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The National Food Authority, Region VII, Cebu City is inviting all interested licensed operators of vessels/barges whether owned through Bareboat/Time/Voyage Charter to apply for eligibility and to bid under the Letter Agreement for Vessel/Barge Hire for the shipment of rice from Cebu City, to various destinations as indicated below:

VOLUME SCHEDULED FOR SEA DISPERSAL

DESTINATION Province	Port	Lot No.	Maximum Quantity/ Lot (bags)	Freight Rate/bag	Approved Budget for the Contract per Lot
Southern Leyte	Maasin	1	20,000	31.50	630,000.00
Biliran	Naval	2	30,000	34.00	1,020,000.00
Western Samar	Catbalogan	3	14,000	34.00	476,000.00
TOTAL			64,000		2,126,000.00

Delivery of the GOODS is required upon receipt of Notice to Proceed until December 31, 2006, or upon completion of the services, whichever is applicable.

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act."

Interested Bidders may obtain further information from the NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY and inspect the Bidding Documents at *NFA, Banilad, Cebu City* starting July 20 to July 26, 2006 from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders form the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of *Ten Thousand Pesos (P10,000.00)*. The method of payment will be in cash. The Bidding Documents shall be reviewed personally by the prospective Bidder or his duly authorized representative.

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on *July 27, 2006 @ 2:00 PM at NFA Training Center, 3rd Flr., Banilad, Cebu City.* Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on *August 08, 2006 not later than 2:00 PM.* All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in an amount at least equal to, and not lower than a percentage of the Approved Budget for the Contract to be bid, in the following schedule and form or any combination thereof:

Form of Security	Minimum Amount in % of ABC to bd bid
Cash / Cashier's / Managers Check payable to NFA issued by a reputable commercial bank in Cebu City or	One Percent (1%)
Surety Bond issued by GSIS marked "Callable on Demand"	Two & a Half Percent (2.5%)

Bid opening shall be on *August 08, 2006 @ 2:00 PM at NFA Training Center, 3rd Flr., Banilad, Cebu City.* Bids will be opened in the presence of Bidders' representatives who choose to attend the bidding. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
RAUL B. CHONG
Banilad, Cebu City
032-232-1932
email address : nfaro7@cvis.net.ph
032-233-6095
website: www.nfacebu.net.ph

(Sgd.) RAUL B. CHONG
RBAC Chairman/ARD

(PDI – July 19 & 25, 2006)

E-mail: pr_provincial_news@inquirer.com.ph

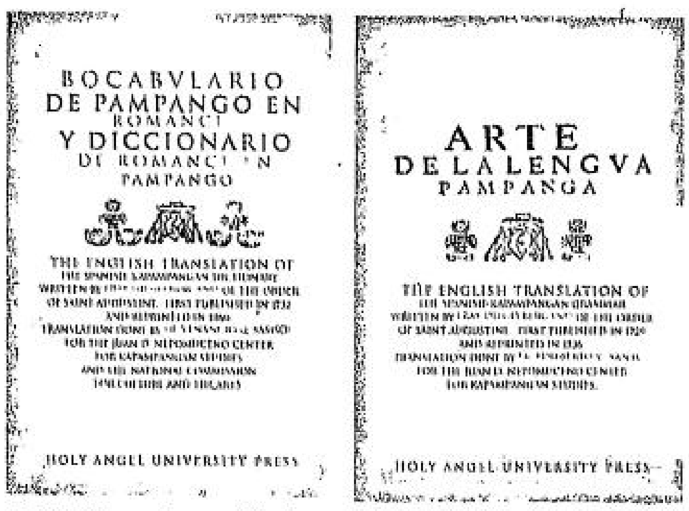
INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Editor **Jun Bandayrel**
Bureau Chief **Rolando B. Fernandez**

Friars' files yield cultural treasures

By Tonette Orejas
Angeles City

ANCIENT KAPAMPANGAN LANguage and culture have not actually been lost. Pioneer Augustinian missionaries secured these in perpetuity through the *arte* (grammar), *vocabulario* (dictionary) and *doctrina* (catechism) they wrote and published decades after the Spaniards established the country's first province, Pampanga, in 1571.



BOCABVLARIO
DE PAMPANGO EN
ROMANCE
Y DICCIONARIO
DE ROMANCE EN
PAMPANGO

THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF

HOLY ANGEL UNIVERSITY PRESS

ARTE
DE LA LENGVA
PAMPANGA

THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF

HOLY ANGEL UNIVERSITY PRESS

SOME of the ancient publications on display at the Holy Angel University's Center for Kapampangan Studies.

Adverbs of time, circa 1621

HOUR	
Galingaldo mababo	just before (or near) daybreak
Abac (or *cayabacan*)	morning
Ogtong aldo (*or ogto yang aldo or caogtoan ning aldo*)	high noon
Gatpanapon	afternoon
Silim (or *silimsilim*)	nightfall
Bengi	night
Capitngan bengi	midnight
DAY	
Ing aldo ngeni	today
Ngening bengi	tonight
Bucas	tomorrow
Cabucas	the whole night (tonight until tomorrow)
Quebucas	the whole night (last night until today)
Bucas bengi	tomorrow night
Macadua	day after tomorrow (two days from now)
Macatlu	three days from now

(COMPILED BY ROBBY TANTINGCO FROM CORONEL'S "ARTE Y REGLAS DE LA LENGUA PAMPANGA" AND BERGAÑO'S "ARTE DE LA LENGUA PAMPANGA" [1729]. TRANSLATED BY FR. EDILBERTO SANTOS.)

But here's why from the ranks of friars sprung the first Kapampangan writers. Explains Fr. Policarpio Hernandez, OSA: "The work of the missionaries to evangelize the Philippines was from the outset very laudable though difficult, as the linguistic panorama in the islands was a veritable mosaic of languages and dialects. This multiplicity of languages was a great obstacle for the missionaries in the first years of evangelization of the Filipinos."

Because there were too many languages, a royal decree in 1594 divided the territories among the five religious orders: Augustinians, Franciscan, Jesuits, Dominicans and Augustinian Recollects.

The Augustinians, Hernandez says, worked among people who spoke Tagalog, Kapampangan, Ilocano, Hiligaynon and Cebuano.

Their writings, adds Hernandez, "were a must or necessary means for the missionary to learn the languages more easily and to transmit in a more accurate and effective way, the message of the Gospel."

But before using the languages to relate with the people, the friar-writers had to first teach their fellow missionaries. For them, the *arte* and the *vocabulario* served as crash courses in language and culture.

They had mastered the languages to the point that they found no need to teach the Christian doctrine in Spanish, disobeying even a royal decree that required them to do so, says Fray Francis Musni, OSA.

How did the early Kapampangan react to this approach at a time when they were learned in the prehistoric writing system of the *baybayin* or *kulitan*?

"When the conquistadores first arrived in Luzon in 1571, they observed that 'every man, woman and child could read and write.' However, by imposing their own writing system, the colonizers in effect turned already literate natives into illiterates once again," says Robby Tantingco, executive director of the Holy Angel University's Juan D. Nepomuceno Center for Kapampangan Studies.

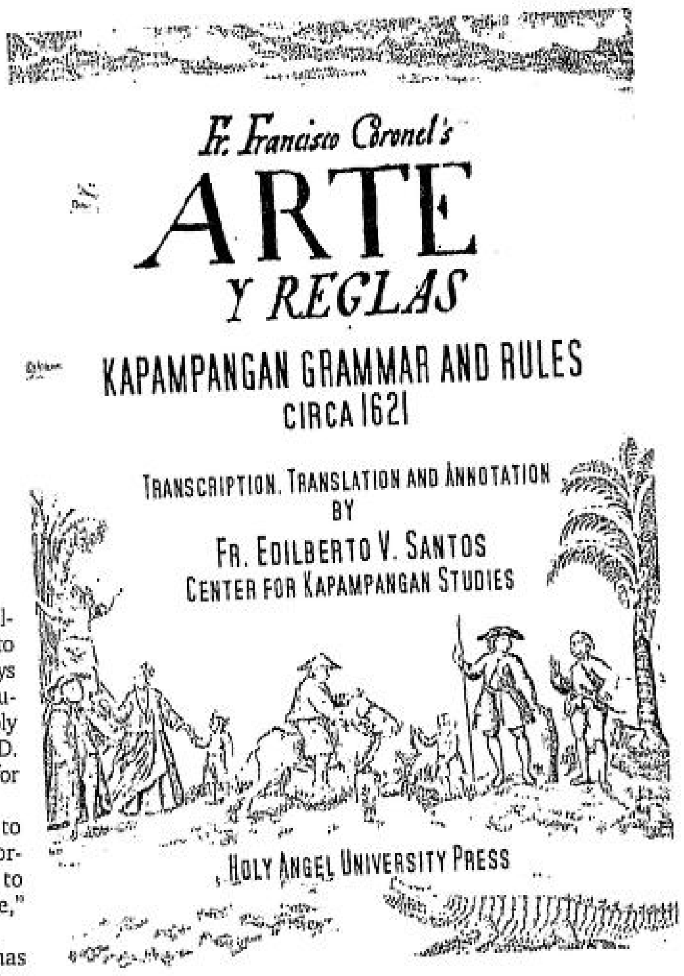
"Our ancestors had to unlearn the ancient orthography to get used to the new, imported one," he says.

The friars' legacy has been preserved in Fray Francisco Coronel's "Arte y Reglas de la Lengua Pampanga" (1621), Fray Diego Bergaño's "Vocabulario en la Lengua Pampanga" (1732) and "Arte de la Lengua Pampanga" (1729), and Fray Alvaro de Benavente's "Arte y Diccionario Pampango" (1700).

The center got hold of a copy of Coronel's manuscripts through the late Bro. Andrew Gonzalez, FSC.

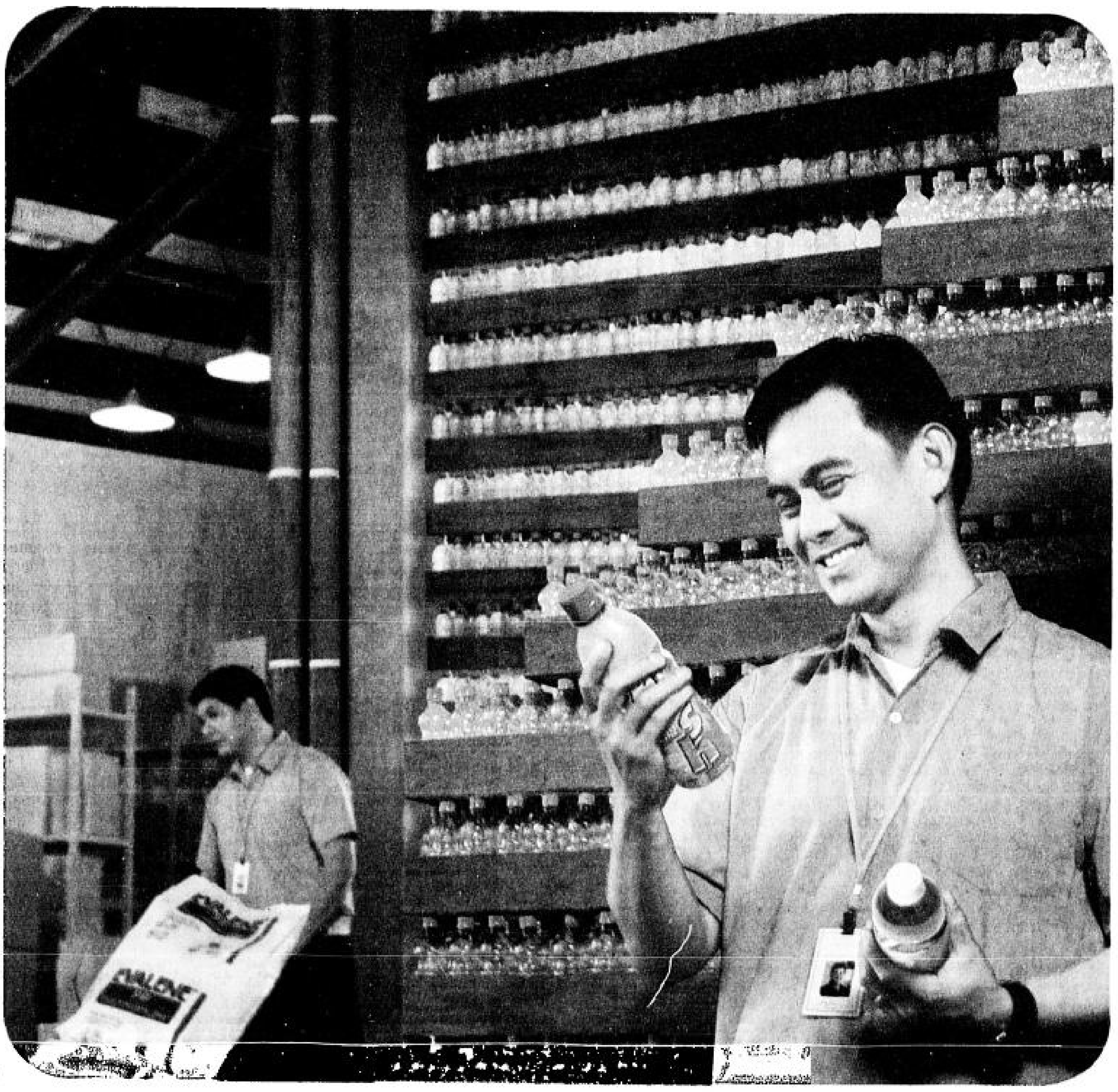
Under the center's auspices, Fr. Edilberto Santos, a former Benedictine monk, translated the works of Coronel, Benavente and Bergaño's *arte*, deciphering the "linguistics and anthropological treasure troves" there.

"We want the present and next generations of Kapampangan to have access to these works and in the process, learn and use the language to prevent its demise. They can also reaffirm the Kapampangan identity in those works," Tantingco says.



Fr. Francisco Coronel's
ARTE
Y REGLAS
KAPAMPANGAN GRAMMAR AND RULES
CIRCA 1621
TRANSCRIPTION, TRANSLATION AND ANNOTATION
BY
FR. EDILBERTO V. SANTOS
CENTER FOR KAPAMPANGAN STUDIES
HOLY ANGEL UNIVERSITY PRESS

THE BOOK cover of an early "arte" work written by an Augustinian missionary.



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FIFTY YEARS

‘Safer’ evacuation plan according to JDV

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE PHILIPPINE GOVERNMENT has drawn up an evacuation plan for thousands of Filipino workers stranded in Lebanon, according to Speaker Jose de Venecia.

He said the plan would entail relocating from 10,000 to 20,000 OFWs to the seat of the Maronite Catholic Church located in northern Beirut on a mountain near the Mediterranean shore.

(The Maronites are members of the Eastern Church living chiefly in Lebanon who maintain a Syrian liturgy and a married clergy.)

The Vatican has approved the relocation plan, said De Venecia. "This plan is the safest route of evacuation at no cost to the government," he added.

He said the contingency plan was to evacuate overseas Filipino workers and their families to the high mountains of northern Beirut instead of "an evacuation under the most dangerous condition by air, which is impossible, or by sea to Cyprus."

De Castro and Ermita

According to the Department of Foreign Affairs, at least 99 percent of some 28,000 documented Filipinos in Lebanon work in the households of Maronite Christians in Beirut.

De Venecia reportedly worked out the plan with Vice President Noli de Castro and Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita.

De Venecia said the evacuation plan could be activated while the Western powers and international agencies, like the Red Cross and Red Crescent Society, implemented emergency plans to extricate other foreigners trapped in the crossfire.

Central to the evacuation plan was Nasrallah Pierre Cardinal Sfeir's "willingness to take in Filipino evacuees in Bkerki," De Venecia said.

Call from the Vatican

To reach the cardinal, whom he met in the 1970s, De Venecia said he had to go through a circuitous route of telephone calls that took most of Monday to complete.

The first call was made to the papal nuncio in Manila, Archbishop Fernando Filoni, who then called the papal nuncio in Beirut, Archbishop Luigi Gatti, to convey the broad strokes of the contingency plan.

Gatti relayed the plan in a telephone call to the Vatican's secretary of state, Angelo Cardinal Sodano who, in turn, made the final call to Sfeir, who agreed to the plan to bring the Filipinos to Bkerki, 10 miles from south Beirut.

OFWs: Nowhere to run; insufficient resources delay exodus

From page A1

Admitting that the government did not have enough resources, the Department of Foreign Affairs said it was resorting to "innovative ways" to assist those trapped.

"We have to face the realities of our resources and capabilities. We have to use whatever resources we have," DFA spokesperson Gilberto Asuque said in a press briefing.

Asuque said that unlike other countries, the Philippines did not have ships or military aircraft that could be flown to Lebanon to pluck out the Filipinos.

But the government is by no means helpless.

Asuque said special envoy Roy Cimatu and the embassy had instructed the honorary Philippine consul in neighboring Syria to find a ship that could be chartered and used by the Filipinos.

As Manila debated whether to order a compulsory evacuation of the more than 30,000 overseas Filipino workers there, the workers group Migrante said it had received word of Filipinos fleeing their employers as Israeli bombs pounded targets in the southern part of Lebanon.

"They do not know what to do. They do not know where to go. Those from the south part, which was the first to be bombed, fled to Beirut. Now they do not know what to do because Beirut has also been bombed," Migrante spokesperson Bert Martinez said.

GMA's orders

Working on a reenacted 2005 budget, the DFA's fund for assisting distressed nationals amounts to only P50.06 million, which has to be budgeted for the needs of other Filipinos in other parts of the world.

Presidential Chief of Staff Michael Defensor said the government had also allotted an initial fund of $500,000, or P25 million, for the preparations it was making to evacuate the Filipinos.

"The President has given her instructions to get the Filipinos out of harm's way and we are finding innovative ways to do that," Asuque said.

Refuge in church

He said it was much cheaper and within the budget to buy ship tickets for the Filipinos rather than charter a plane or a ship in the Philippines, which would be too costly.

As the conflict raged, scores of Filipinos had sought shelter in the Church of the Miraculous Medal, which is run by a Filipino priest and located 8 km from the embassy.

At least 125 Filipino workers who faced repatriation prior to the outbreak of the conflict because of visa problems have found refuge in the church in addition to an undetermined number of other OFWs.

"We expect more Filipinos to arrive there," he said.

The 125 are trying to leave for Cyprus on a cruise ship, along with other foreign nationals.

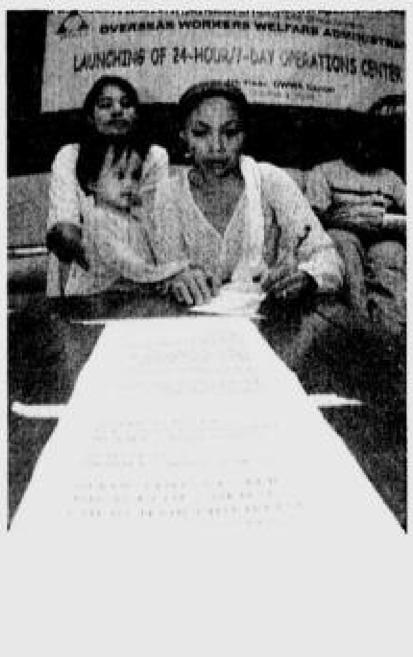
Filipinos who want to leave Beirut can take the ship but the vessel will be available only on a "first come, first served" basis, Asuque said.

Officials said they had no idea how many OFWs wanted to leave Lebanon at this time.

The world, in contrast

In contrast to the Filipinos' plight, other nations have deployed helicopters, warships, chartered ferries and buses to pluck tens of thousands of trapped foreigners from Lebanon.

With Beirut's airport in tatters, foreigners fled by bus to Syria to escape Israeli bombs, missiles and artillery fire, as others were taken away by ship or helicopter to Cyprus.


OVERSEAS WORKERS WELFARE ADMINISTRATION
LAUNCHING OF 24-HOUR/7-DAY OPERATIONS CENTER

WHERE TO CALL? WHAT TO DO? Anang Alonto, a relative of an OFW in Beirut ponders her options as the Overseas Workers Welfare Association rushes to set up a 24/7 operations center for yet another crisis that the OFWs and their relatives have to face. RYAN LIM

In London, Prime Minister Tony Blair said Britain now had six ships in the region.

"We are appealing for the understanding of our people," Asuque said in Filipino. "We are doing everything to the extent of our resources. Our aim is to immediately help our compatriots."

Cimatu, who heads the Middle East Preparedness Team, will determine if the embassy's alert level should be raised to 4, which means Filipinos should be evacuated out of the capital.

Cimatu was set to leave for Beirut last night.

"We are getting ready as the situation worsens," Asuque said. "All embassies in the Middle East have been alerted on these measures. They should be ready to provide shelter to our Filipino nationals if they pass through their jurisdictions."

As in any war situation, Asuque said that Filipinos and others remaining in Beirut faced difficulties in obtaining food and other necessary provisions.

Safe passage

He said major infrastructure had been affected, as well as power lines and cell phone sites.

Asuque said the two possible evacuation routes remained the Beirut-Cyprus route by sea and the Beirut-Syria route by land.

Asuque said the Philippines was also making representations with the Hezbollah guerrillas to allow safe passage to the Filipino convoy.

With cellular phone networks out, Asuque appealed to relatives of the stranded Filipinos "to refrain from calling the embassy's landline so that the lines of communication remain open between the embassy and the OFWs in Lebanon, as well as with the Philippines."

President Arroyo, who was to return from Libya last night, was expected to meet with her Cabinet upon her arrival and discuss how to move the Filipinos out of Lebanon.

Defensor said there were 160 Filipinos now at the Our Lady of Miraculous Medal church. He said another church where the OFWs could go to was the Church of the St. Joseph.

Defensor and Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said the current situation showed that the Filipinos were still safe where they were.

The two officials said that it would cost $300-$400 to ferry each person out by ship, or $12 million for all the 30,000 Filipinos.

Defensor and Gonzalez also said that should the government use its C-130 plane, this would cost P280,000 per hour in gas consumption. The flight would take 12 hours and a C-130 plane could only accommodate 100 people per flight.

OFWs confused

"Whatever is needed, whatever funding is needed to make sure people are safe, we will definitely look for the funds necessary for their evacuation," Defensor said.

The continued absence of a clear Philippine government evacuation plan was starting to cause confusion among Filipinos in Beirut and nearby areas, Migrante said.

Martinez told the INQUIRER that the families of migrant workers in Lebanon had received word that their loved ones were losing sleep over what to do in the event the areas where they were staying were affected by the bombing.

Fely Gudasen, whose daughter Irma works as a domestic helper in the southern part of Lebanon, said her daughter was frantic the last time they talked.

"She could no longer sleep. The area she evacuated to was also already getting hit," Gudasen said.

Migrante learned that Irma had chosen to stay with her employers as they fled.

"We hope that the government starts getting its act together. Our migrant workers in the area are starting to get restless over what they should do next," Martinez said. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño, Jerome Aning, Norman Bordadora and AFP*

Bush expletive caught on mike at G-8 summit

From page A1

Blair discussed the upsurge of violence in the Middle East.

Informed later that his unguarded comments at the Group of Eight summit in St. Petersburg had been broadcast around the world, Bush just "rolled his eyes and laughed," the White House said.

Neither Bush nor Blair realized a microphone was transmitting their candid thoughts on the Middle East and other issues during their private conversation over lunch at the G-8 summit.

Bush, eating a piece of bread and calling for a diet Coke, confided to Blair: "I think Condi [Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice] is going to go [to the Middle East] pretty soon."

Blair replied: "Right, that's all that matters, it will take some time to get that together."

The British prime minister added: "See, if she (Rice) goes out, she's got to succeed as it were, whereas I can just go out and talk."

As Blair was addressing the intricacies of the Mideast crisis, Bush expressed his vision of geopolitics in more earthy terms: "See, the irony is what they need to do is get Syria to get Hezbollah to stop doing this shit and it's over."

Salty

Eventually, Blair noticed the microphone and hastily switched it off, but not before the recording had reached the news media.

Asked what Bush felt when told that his comments had been broadcast worldwide, White House spokesperson Tony Snow said: "His reaction first was, 'What did I say?' So we showed him the transcript, then he rolled his eyes and laughed."

Asked by reporters whether he had a comment about the president's use of an expletive, Snow raised a laugh: "Not unless you've never used it."

While the language was salty, the message from Bush was what it had been throughout the summit—that Syria was supporting Hezbollah guerrillas in southern Lebanon and should force them to stop shelling Israel and return two abducted Israeli soldiers.

US officials believe that if Hezbollah guerrillas did so, Israel's military strikes on Lebanon might stop.

Remarks on Annan

In their chummy conversation, Bush also complained to Blair about UN Secretary General Kofi Annan wanting an immediate ceasefire to stop the violence between Israel and Hezbollah.

"I don't like the sequence of it," Bush said. "His attitude is basically ceasefire and everything else happens."

Blair replied: "I think the thing that is really difficult is you can't stop this unless you get this international presence agreed."

A G-8 statement on Sunday suggested the UN Security Council should consider an international security and monitoring presence on the Lebanon-Israel border, an idea that Blair had been pushing.

Later, Bush said he felt like telling Annan to telephone Syrian President Bashar al-Assad "and make something happen ... We're not blaming Israel and we're not blaming the Lebanese government."

The White House spokesperson later told reporters on Air Force One, which carried Bush back to Washington, that the US leader did not feel he had to explain comments that he and Blair had made about Annan.

Snow called Bush's remarks "a slice of a conversation that was a carry-over from previous conversations." "When it comes to Kofi Annan, he likes Kofi Annan and he is not only happy to work with him, but has been supportive from the very start of the UN mission to the region," the spokesperson said.

Snow added: "All the president was saying is that he wants to make sure that the sequencing is clear when it comes to action with regard to the situation in the Middle East."

Enduring warmth

Bush's overheard exchange with Blair revealed more than just a presidential use of expletives—which has been known to occur at the White House from the Kennedy administration onward.

Blair may be all Oxford-educated eloquence and Bush Texas-style informality, but their exchange demonstrated the enduring warmth between the two leaders.

"Thanks for the sweater, awfully thoughtful of you. I know you picked it out yourself," Bush told Blair with a laugh.

"Oh, absolutely," Blair assured his close friend. *Reports from Reuters, AFP and AP*

DNA in panties, condom matches Nicole's, says expert

From page A1

terial extracted from a human cell that contains biological information unique to the bearer.

Because it is as unique as a thumbprint, DNA is used in criminal investigations to identify persons involved in a crime by comparing it with samples obtained from a victim or a suspect.

"The condom and the underwear had female DNA, and they matched. They are the same DNA profiles ... which means they most likely belong to the same person," the expert witness said during direct examination by State Prosecutor Hazel Valdez.

Both pieces of evidence were turned over to the DNA Analysis Section at PNP headquarters in Camp Crame on Nov. 8, transported from the PNP Crime Laboratory in Olongapo City.

Microblue test

In reply to Valdez's question, Supe said that while it was possible that the evidence had not been handled properly before the turnover, he said the condom and the panties were not contaminated as they still yielded DNA samples.

He said male and female DNA profiles were extracted from areas on the condom and the underwear where spots of biological fluid were found through a microblue test, conducted by exposing a specimen to blue light.

Through an amber-colored viewer, analysts are able to identify spots with bodily fluids—saliva, blood, semen, vaginal fluid, sweat or even tears—as they appear in a glowing blue color.

While the test may lead experts to areas where DNA can be extracted, it cannot specify which part of the body the spots came from, Supe explained.

Upon Valdez's questioning, Supe related how analysts came to match the female DNA found in both specimens with that of the complainant.

He said Nicole's DNA, extracted from a blood sample that she had voluntarily provided, was the same as that found in the panties and the condom.

"I am comparing now, and it appears that they match exactly—the DNA profiles generated from the blood sample and the samples generated from the condom and the underwear," said Supe, referring to two DNA test results he was holding.

Only female DNA

Interestingly, the used condom, retrieved at Subic's Alava Pier where a distraught Nicole was found after the alleged rape, yielded only female DNA, later confirmed as matching Nicole's.

The rubber contained no male DNA profile.

Only Nicole's underwear tested positive for male DNA—a result that Supe attributed to the possible "degradation" of bodily fluids on the condom.

"It could have been because of the degradation of the DNA and the exposure of a specimen (the condom) to environmental insults, particularly the humid condition, bacterial factors that may have contaminated it ... and the enzyme inside DNA which destroys it when functioning outside a living system," Supe said.

Valdez then sought Supe's expertise on the possible indications of the presence of male DNA in a woman's underwear, and asked him its possible source.

He replied: "We're dealing here with a [pair of panties] and you would think of areas that come in contact with a panty... The most probable source is either saliva or seminal stains. But if you go by logic, I don't see any reason why anybody would lick a panty."

Supe, however, said the owner of the male DNA could not be identified as yet, as the crime laboratory lacked a sample with which to compare the results.

No DNA samples

None of the accused—Smith, Lance Corporals Keith Silkwood and Dominic Duplantis, and Staff Sgt. Chad Carpentier—had submitted his specimen for DNA testing.

Hoping to settle the score, the prosecution panel filed a motion on Monday asking the court to compel the accused to submit blood samples for comparison with the male DNA found in Nicole's panties.

Defense lawyers told the court that they would file their reply on Thursday.

Valdez also asked Supe what a female's DNA could be doing in a used condom.

"The most plausible is that the inside of the condom came in contact with [Nicole]... Maybe that part of the condom was rubbed with [Nicole]," he said.

But why inside?

Supe's reply: "Most likely it came in contact with the genital area, [but it] was turned inside out most likely, such that the [DNA] specimen was preserved."

He estimated that the condom was around eight inches long and around three centimeters in diameter.

Valdez then asked Supe to demonstrate how a condom could have been reversed.

Supe had apparently anticipated the question and brought a condom.

Demonstrating, he said the condom could have been turned inside out in the act of removing it.

Not proof

Asked to comment after the hearing, defense lawyer Jose Justiniano said Supe's testimony did not help prove rape.

He said the presence of the male and female DNA in the specimen could at most prove that a man and a woman had sex.

"It cannot prove rape. It may only prove intercourse, but remember that in this case, they are not only trying to prove intercourse but that there was a presence of force or intimidation," Justiniano said.

The defense panel is to cross-examine Supe on Thursday.

Senators see smooth sailing for new education secretary

By Philip C. Tubeza

IT'S SMOOTH SAILING FOR JESLI.

Newly appointed Education Secretary Jesli Lapus is expected to be confirmed easily by the Commission on Appointments, Sen. Ralph Recto said yesterday.

Recto, a member of the powerful commission, predicted "smooth sailing for the confirmation" of Lapus as the new Department of Education (DepEd) chief.

"I'm not jumping the gun on my colleagues, but I think Jesli's confirmation hearing will not be a heroic struggle on his part," Recto said in a statement.

He said that while Lapus does not originally come from the education sector, this "will have no import on the CA treatment of his nomination."

"If you want to manage a class of 50, get a good teacher, but if you want to manage a bureaucracy of 500,000, get a good manager. And, Jesli is it," Recto said.

"We should remember that he ran the country's biggest bank and, in an age when PhDs have a hard time balancing the checkbook, that is no mean feat," he added.

Lapus was the president and chief executive officer of the Land Bank of the Philippines from 1992 to 1998.

"He liberated teachers from loan sharks. As a congressman, it is assumed that he immersed himself in the public school system in his district and probably visited more public schools than a desk-bound DepEd bureaucrat," Recto said.

"The education sector is in crisis and the one who can fix it isn't probably a good lecturer or pedigreed academician, but, a problem-solver with a good track record," he added.

Sen. Mar Roxas said he supported the education program unveiled by Lapus which focuses on teacher-training, improving the managerial skills of those in charge of schools, and addressing the huge budget gap that led to the current crisis in public education.

"As a former congressman, he understands how the budget process works, and as a former bank president, he has the managerial know-how to move the DepEd bureaucracy toward the right direction," Roxas said.

He said Lapus' experience as a university professor also "assures the public of his familiarity with the challenges that teachers and school administrators face."

"We should put more money into education, and make sure that these funds are properly utilized. Last June, the nation woke up at the opening day of classes with the usual perennial problems such as classroom, seats, and textbook shortages," Roxas said.

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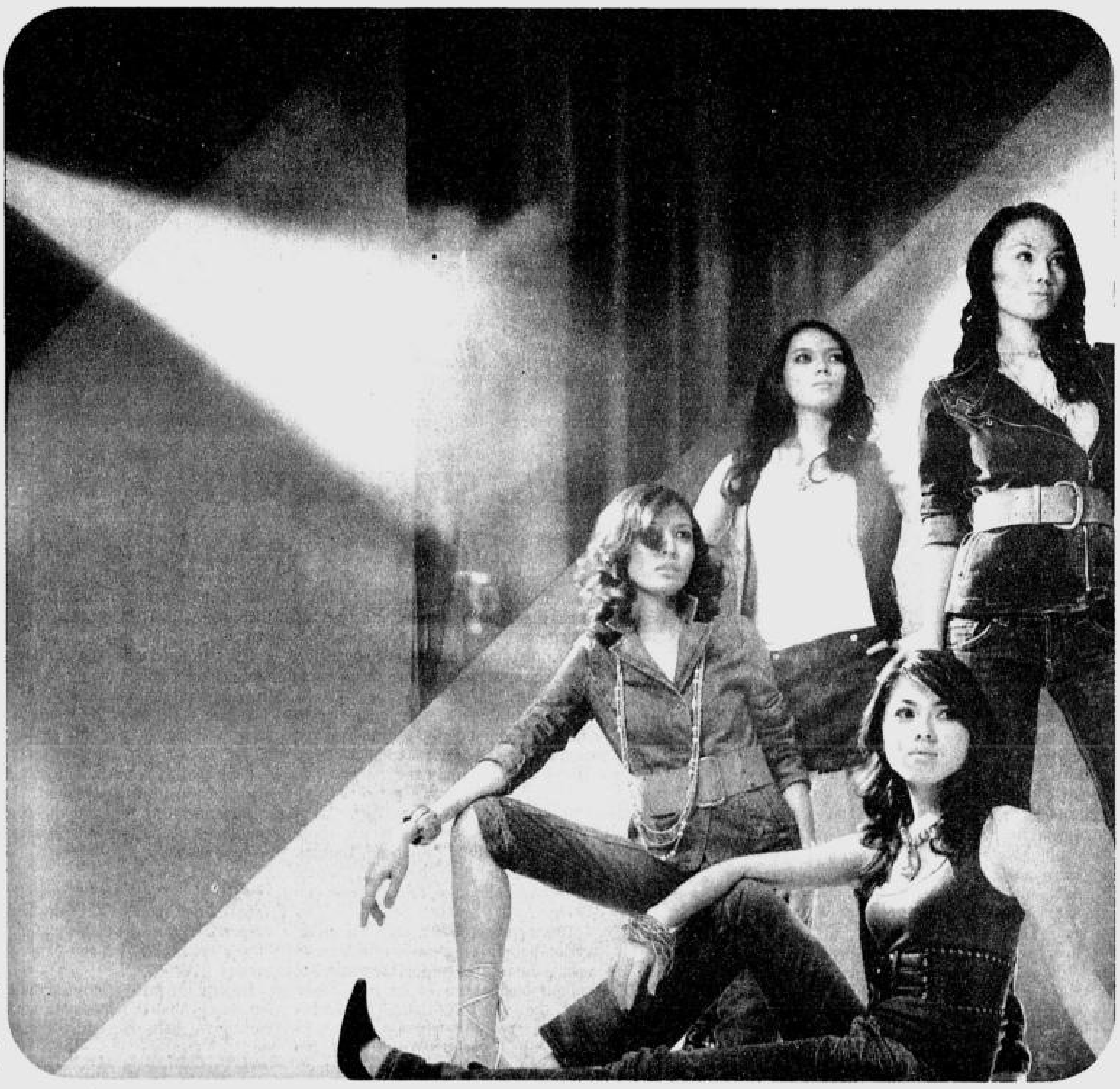

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IN THE KNOW

LACSON: Matter of accounting

BOLANTE defended by friend

US FOOD AID
PL (Public Law) Program 480

SINCE 1991, THE PHILIPPINES has received food aid from the United States through the PL (Public Law) Program 480, also known as the US Agricultural Trade Development Assistance Act.

The program is intended for the benefit of developing countries that have difficulty in providing for the food needs of its citizens through commercial sources because of foreign exchange problems.

Under the program, the Philippines is extended commodity loans; the payment is expected over 30 years, with a grace period of seven years.

The loans amounted to $190 million from 1991 to 2001, with soybean meal the sole commodity requested until 1998. Sorghum and rice were included in 1999.

Last July 14, at a ceremony held at the University of the Philippines-Los Baños, US Ambassador Kristie Kenney signed another "PL 480 agreement" with Finance Secretary Margarito Teves and Agriculture Secretary Domingo Panganiban.

$20-M rice agreement

This year's agreement provides for 69,000 metric tons of rice valued at $20 million to be sold on concessional credit terms to the Philippine government, which will in turn sell the commodity and use the proceeds for agricultural development to benefit thousands of Filipinos.

The stock of rice is expected to arrive early next year, and the Philippine government through the National Food Authority will sell it through open and competitive bidding.

Proceeds from the sale may be used only with the express approval of Congress, written as a provision in the General Appropriations Act.

4 priority areas

The proceeds will be used for Philippine agricultural development in four priority areas—post-harvest handling and infrastructure development, biotechnology research and commercialization, livestock development and capacity building.

The Department of Agriculture has formed an oversight committee to determine what programs and projects may be financed by the PL 480 funds.

The agriculture undersecretary for planning chairs the committee. Its members include the heads of the department's Agribusiness and Marketing Assistance Service, Project Development Service, Field Operations Group, and Finance and Administration, the Agricultural Training Institute, and the National Agricultural and Fishery Council.

According to a US Embassy news release, the agricultural development projects that may be funded using the PL 480 proceeds include the building of farm-to-market infrastructure such as roads and warehouses; the purchase of equipment and provision of training to support harvesting, post-harvest product storage and non-spoilage; research and development in biotechnology; and training aimed at providing modern technology to farmers.

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Lacson: Bolante may have misused ...

From page A1

taken out, but we don't even know how effectively the program is being implemented," he said.

The source also said the funds were coursed through the US Agency for International Development (USAID) under PL 480. (*See In the Know.*)

"The ODA funds are easily commingled with tax/budget funds and hard to isolate. Thus, when disbursements are made, *sama-sama na* (They are commingled)," he said.

'This is big'

Backing Lacson's claim, the source said the Americans might be holding Bolante because they were "not happy" with how the funds were spent.

"It's a matter of accounting. So maybe they're not happy with how official government funds are used. This is big. That's how I see it," he said.

Bolante was arrested on July 7 at the Los Angeles International Airport purportedly because of a cancelled visa and is being held at a detention facility in San Pedro, California.

He is believed to be the architect of the distribution of P728 million in fertilizer funds to administration allies to ensure President Macapagal-Arroyo's victory in the 2004 election.

But neither the Philippine nor US government has fully explained the circumstances of Bolante's arrest and continued detention.

Early this week, former Solicitor General Francisco Chavez said Malacañang and the US government could be colluding to keep Bolante in the United States.

The INQUIRER source pointed out that the US government had come out strongly against corruption wherever it was occurring—in Third World countries, the United Nations and even the World Bank.

"Even at the World Bank, President George W. Bush has assigned [Paul] Wolfowitz [as president]. They're now cracking down on corruption in the World Bank bureaucracy. That's official," the source said.

He added: "And it's the same here. They want a better use of scarce resources. We have to work on the premise that the US government, the state department particularly, and Homeland Security are in a different paradigm now. They are looking at security matters and at the Philippines as one of their important partners [in the region] in the fight against terrorism.

"We also have to look at the corruption cases which the Bush administration has been really working hard to eradicate."

'He's a friend'

But Presidential Management Staff chief Arthur Yap, a former agriculture secretary, took up the cudgels for Bolante, saying the latter's act of giving funds to local government units was a "normal activity" of the Department of Agriculture (DA).

Yap, who is also Ms Arroyo's adviser for job creation, succeeded Luis "Cito" Lorenzo, Bolante's boss, as agriculture secretary in 2004.

"I know (Bolante) personally; he's a friend. And I think what he did, downloading funds, was nothing anomalous, if you ask me," Yap said at the Bulong Pulungan forum.

According to Yap, the department gives funds to local government units usually upon the request of their officials, and if the requests tally with departmental programs.

"We really bring down funds to local governments to implement. Agriculture is a devolved activity under the Administrative Code, anyway. Agriculture should be pursued by provinces. When we bring down funds, we usually ask for a counterpart. We expect local governments to match them. It's a normal activity that we do," Yap said.

He said that when he was agriculture secretary, he also gave departmental funds to governors but nobody had questioned his actions.

The Senate's agriculture and blue ribbon committees recommended last year the filing of criminal charges against Bolante, Lorenzo, former Agriculture Undersecretaries Ibarra Poliquit and Belinda Gonzales, Assistant Secretary Jose Felix Montes and all DA regional directors who took part in the supposed misuse of the fertilizer funds.

Backed by requests

Yap also said that the funds Bolante had authorized for release were backed by requests, and that the list of the recipients was drawn up before the money was released.

"I understand from what I've been told that all of those requests had a history. I think it was being portrayed like a midnight list ... like something to facilitate the elections. But the [Department of Budget and Management] has records of the lists having been made for quite some time... If [anything], it was a travesty of circumstance," Yap said.

Yap, however, said he did not know the full story behind his friend's arrest in the United States.

"Actually, we had a meeting yesterday, and among Palace officials, we don't know the full extent of what happened. We hope we can clarify this in the next few days," he said.

Mum's the word

The US Embassy in Manila yesterday continued to keep mum on Bolante's case.

In a one-page letter, US Ambassador Kristie Kenney expressed appreciation for Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr.'s efforts "to combat corruption," but politely turned down his request for details about Bolante's arrest.

Kenney told Magsaysay, chair of the Senate inquiry into the fertilizer fund scam, that "the usual diplomatic practice" was for the Department of Foreign Affairs to make the request with the US government.

She also said there were some "legal and procedural restrictions" on what her government could publicly reveal.

With the embassy's reply, Magsaysay wrote Foreign Secretary Alberto Romulo yesterday to formally ask the DFA to look into Bolante's case and inform the public of its findings.

Magsaysay also wrote Kenney again, saying: "I appreciate your acknowledgment of our efforts to combat corruption particularly involving Bolante, against whom Senate committee report No. 54 recommended the filing of plunder charges.

"This is also pursuant to the implementation of the Anti-Money Laundering Act and its amendments, which I earlier sponsored and pushed notwithstanding the opposition and difficulties the measures faced."

Witnesses at the Senate inquiry had alleged that the fertilizer funds were diverted in a manner that resembled money laundering transactions.

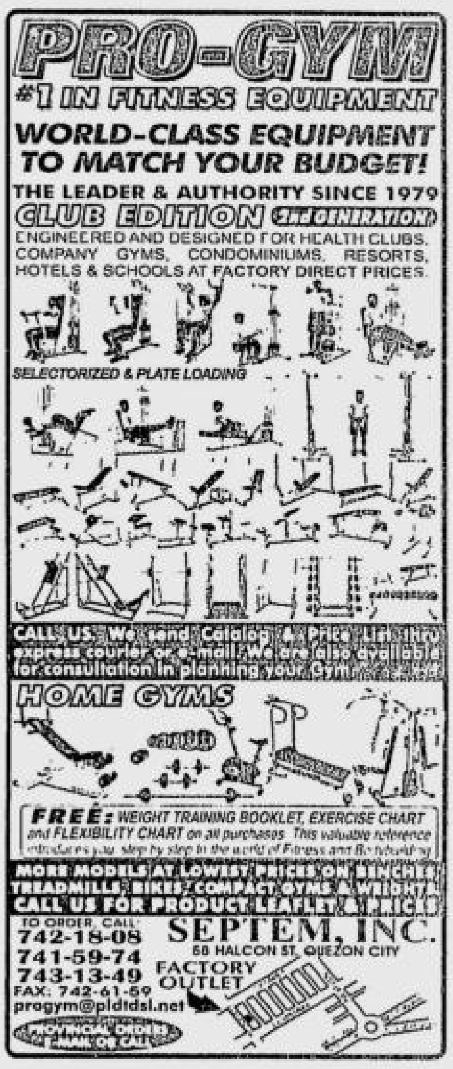
"Unanswered questions which Bolante left hanging with his evasion of the Philippine Senate inquiry involve an intricate scheme of money laundering which the United States aggressively seeks to eradicate in and out of its borders," Magsaysay said.

Public concern

In his letter to Romulo, Magsaysay said the details of Bolante's arrest and detention in Los Angeles should be revealed to the public because the latter's case had become "a matter of public concern."

"I cannot reiterate the importance and urgency of this request citing national welfare since decadent wastage of people's money is involved. The right to information is due our people, especially the millions of Filipino farmers who were deceived with the plunder of the fertilizer fund in 2004," the senator said.

"With access to information, the public avoids making guesses and speculations based on rumors, half-truths, conjectures and canards," he said.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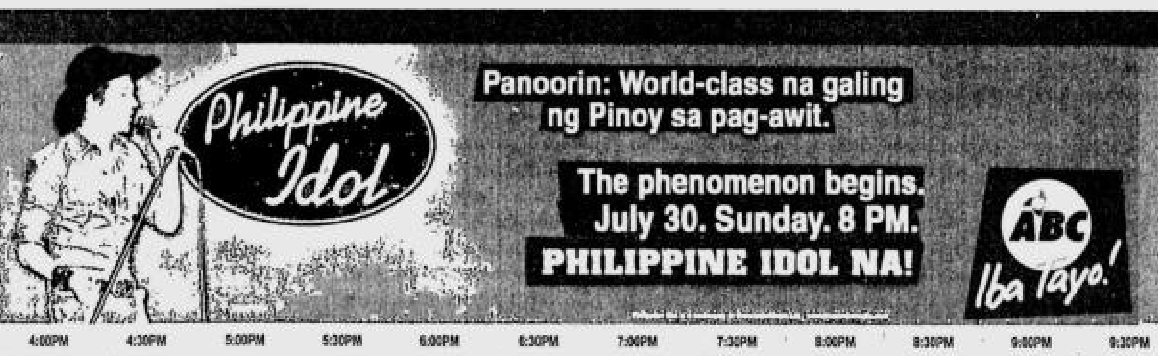
TV GUIDE
Wednesday, July 19, 2006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Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
ABC 5				National Geographic	PBA				Sentro	PBA					Big News	Road To MVP	Fear Factor		
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema			Pasion de Amor	Little Amy	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Calla Lily	TV Patrol World		Kapamilya Deal Or No Deal	Bituing Walang Ningning	Sa Piling Mo	My Girl	A Love To Kill	Bandila	S.O.C.O.		
AXN		CSI: NY (Season 2)		Worlds Apart		Ripley's Believe It or Not		Amazon		The Amazing Race 5		30 Seconds To Fame	Samsung Sports World	Maximum Exposure (Season 1)		CSI: Crime Scene Investigation (Season 6)		CSI: Miami (Season 3)	
Cartoon Network	Pixie And Dixie	All New Popeye Show	Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Winx Club	Xiaolin Showdown	Codename Kids Next Door	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	The Simpsons	Samurai Jack	PokeMon	Dice	Gundam Seed Destiny	The Simpsons	Teen Titans	Justice League	The Batman	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock
Cinema One		Inday Bote				Anak				Eto Na Naman Ako			Persona	[illegible] (9:15 PM)				Bagsik Ng Kamao	
Cinemax			The Notorious Landlady (3:35 PM)				The Nugget (5:35 PM)			The Making Of Battlestar Galactica		Battlestar Galactica Mission 4			Blood & Chocolate A Love Story (9:25 PM)			The Adventures Of Brisco County Jr.	
CNN		Business International		World News	World Sport	Larry King Live		Business International	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia	World News Asia	Your World Today			
Crime/Suspense		Cold Case		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Profiler		Forensic Files	I, Detective	Law & Order		Law & Order: Special Victims Unit		Way Of The Gun				Bones	Surface
Discovery Channel	Building The Ultimate	Perfect Disaster		American Chopper		Blueprint For Disaster		Building The Biggest		Wild Discovery		China 21		Da Vinci Declassified		A Haunting		Psychic Witness	
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-[illegible] Bunny	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Lilo & Stitch	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	That's So Raven	Wonderful World Of Disney			American Dragon	Buzz on Maggie	Kim Possible	Totally Spies	Wonderful World Of Disney	
ESPN												Germany Tonight							
ETC		America's Next Top Model 4		Change of Heart	Elimidate	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	The Tyra Banks Show		Veronica Mars 2		Beach Girls		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
ETC 2nd Avenue		Starting Over		The Maury Povich Show		The Jerry Springer Show		Dr. Phil		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition	The Ellen Show		Wheel Of Fortune	Jeopardy	Cold Turkey		NBC Nightly News	The Inside Edition
EWTN	St. Thomas More: Faithful Statesman	Chaplet Of Mercy/ Angelus	Faith In Motion	Truth In The Heart	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	Suffering And The Love Of God	EWTN Catholic Classic	The Church & The Poor: Building Bridges	Mother Angelica Live Classics		Daily Mass		Holy Land Rosary/ Angelus	One In Their Hands: Heroes Of Priesthood	Parable	Rome Reports	Special Programming	
Fox News		On The Record With Greta Van Susteren		The O'Reilly Factor		Your World With Neil Cavuto		Fox & Friends						Fox News Live					
GMA 7	Agawin Mo Man Ang Lahat	Now and Forever (3:15 PM)	Ang Pagbabago (3:45 PM)		Saiyuki	Dragonball Z	Jewel In The Palace	24 Oras		Captain Barbell (7:10 PM)		Majika		I Luv NY (8:50 PM)	Love Of The Condor Heroes	Nuts Entertainment			Saksi
Hallmark Channel		[illegible] (3:15 PM)		Ratz (4:05 PM)				McLeod's Daughters		Strong Medicine		Missing I		Judging Amy		Gentle Ben: Black Gold			Judging Amy (11:45 PM)
HBO			Impulse (3:45 PM)				Action Jackson (5:45 PM)				The Forgotten			The Stepford Wives			Wag The Dog		
Hero TV	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Angelic Layer	Tokyo Underground	Metal Fighter Miku	Beyblade G-Revolution	Yu-Gi-Oh GX	Naruto	Mirmo de Pon	Inuyasha	Yu-Gi-Oh Duel Monsters	Yakitate! Japan	Mr. Ajikko	D.I.C.E.	Super Gals	Angelic Layer
IBC 13		EZ Shop				Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	TV Infomercial		Japan Video Topics/ [illegible]		Global Family Series		Travel Philippines	BYK 101	Up Close And Personal	IBC News Tonite	Breaking Barriers	
JackTV	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	The Late Show David Letterman		Heat		Velocity		X-Men	Street Smarts	Mad TV		That 70s Show	My Name Is Earl	The Late Show David Letterman		The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Premium Blend	Primetime Glick	Chappelle Show
Lifestyle Network		30 Minute Meals	Wolfgang Puck	Sweet Dreams	Smart Solutions	Sensible Chic	DIY: Crafts	Iron Chef America		My Country, My Kitchen	E! Entertainment Special		Living Spaces	Martha		Fine Living Special		Intimate Portrait	
MTV Philippines		Homewrecker	Room Raiders	MTV Screen	MTV Hits					Get Spotted	MTV Screen	TRL		Homewrecker	Room Raiders	Get Hitch'd	Homecoming	MTV Live [illegible]	
MYX		Rock MYX	My MYX	Mellow MYX	Urban MYX	Take 5	MYXILOG	MYX Firsts	Star MYX	OPM MYX	Pop MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		MYX Live!		Band Of The Run	My MYX	MYX Backtrax	MYXILOG
National Geographic	Wildlife Diary	National Geographic Specials		Journey Into Amazonia		Totally Wild: Elephant Seal Weaning	Wild Orphans	Top 5 - Amazing Moments	Top 5 - Amazing Moments	WOW! Deep Jungle		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Seconds From Disaster: Florida Swamp Air Crash		Inside 911: Zero Hour	
NBN		Teledyaryo Alas-Tres		Teledyaryo Sports [illegible]			Dong Ko, Mahal Mo Ba Siya?	Teledyaryo W/ Ely Langit & Angelique Lazo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)				Teledyaryo Final Edition				Bantay OCW With Susan K	
Net 25	INC Chronicles	Convergence	Auto Motor Sport	The Planet	Tomorrow Today	Ang Pagbubunyag		News Boot (Live)		Openline (Live)	Kapatid Sa Hanapbuhay	INC Chronicles E	INC Chronicles F	Ang Tamang Daan		World Report	Gabay Sa Kalusugan	DWTV Journal News	The Planet
Nickelodeon	Chalkzone	Hey Arnold!	SpongeBob SquarePants	Rocket Power	Four Eyes	SpongeBob SquarePants Right On Top	The Adventures of Jimmy Neutron: Boy Genius My Life As Teenage Robot	Nick Kicks! All Grown Up		The Fairly Odd Parents	Drake & Josh	Unfabulous	Romeo	Naturally Sadie	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	The Fairly Odd Parents	My Dad The Rock Star	
PBO			[illegible]				Tatsulok				Masikip Sa Dibdib				Kahit Akoy Busabos				[illegible]
Qtv		Shaman King	Outlaw Star	Galaxy Angel	MMS (My Music Station)		Moms		Phoenix	Irene	Fireworks	Damo	Project 11	Now Na!		News On Q	Balikbayan		Irene
RPN 9	TV Shopping				Kapatid Show	RPN Aksyon News		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	Iron Chef		Three Wishes		Extreme Make-Over		Newswatch Now	Cargo For Truth		Kerygma
SBN 21								Sony Music Video				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Sony Music Video		Sony Music Video	
Solar Sports						Volleyball: China Volley Masters match 2				Sagupaan	NBA Jam	2006 JONES CUP				Solar Sports Desk	NBA Access	2006 Uber Cup Officials	
Sports Plus		Buck C'ship Highlights		FIFA World Cup '06: Match 64 Finals						NASCAR New England 300 NHIS									[illegible]
Star Movies				Pieces Of April			Stepmom (5:25 PM)				Boogeyman			The Sixth Sense				King Arthur (10:50 PM)	
Star World		The Bold & The Beautiful		General Hospital		Monk		The Simpsons	Malcolm In The Middle	Star News Asia	Seinfeld	Beauty & The Geek/ Rockstar		Boston Legal		The Apprentice		Seinfeld	Beauty & The Geek/ Rockstar
Studio 23	Bewitched	YuGi-Oh 3 & 4				Batman Beyond	Xiaolin Showdown	Spirits	Blog	Wazzup Wazzup	CSI Season 5		24 Season 4 (8:20 PM)	It's A Guy Thing (9:10 PM)		News Central	Oprah		Just Shoot Me

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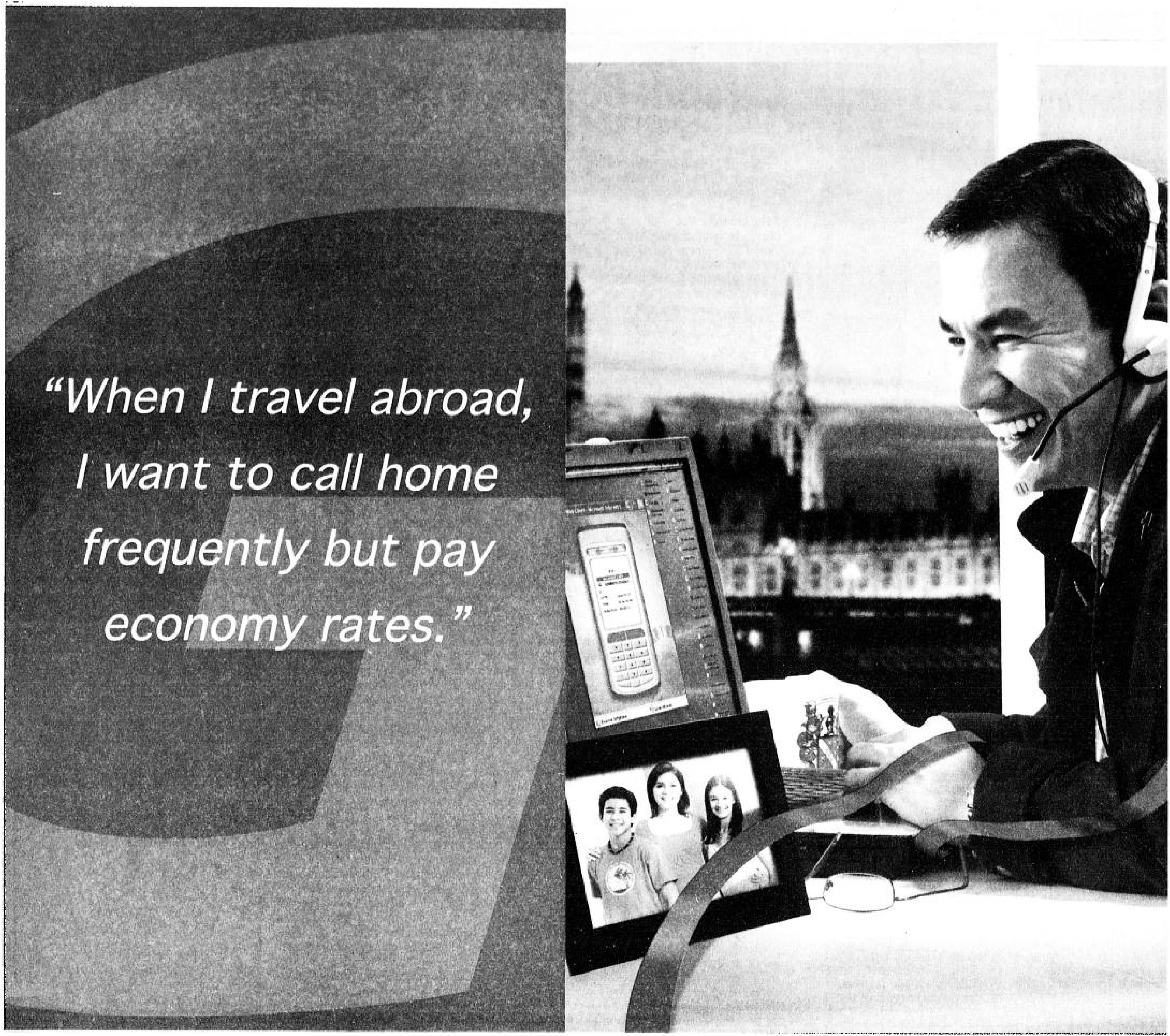
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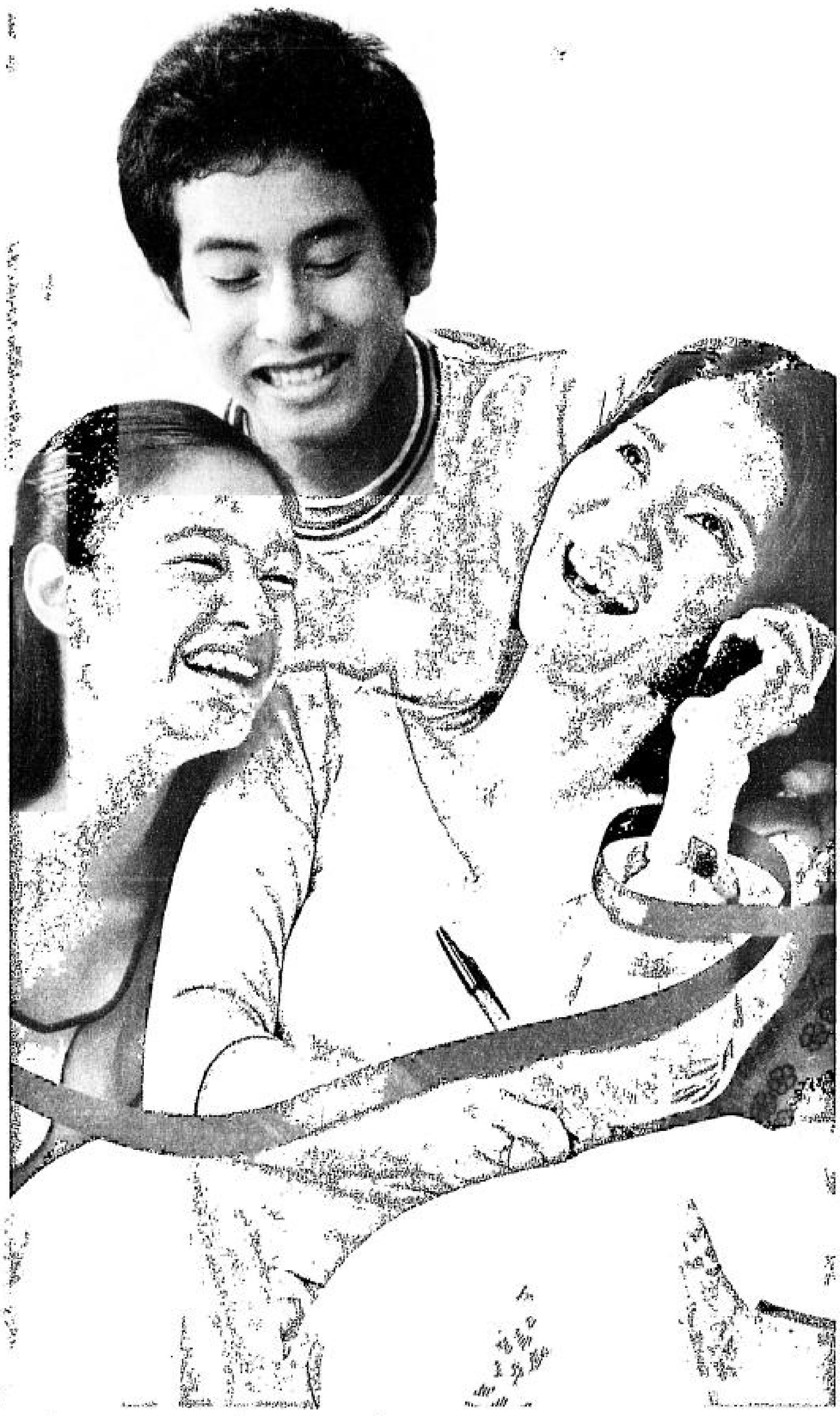

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Coast Guard to probe Pandacan oil spillage

Shell could face penalties from DENR, PCG for leak

By Leila B. Salaverria and Blanche S. Rivera

THE PHILIPPINE COAST GUARD WILL INvestigate the oil spill that occurred last Saturday at the Pandacan fuel depot in Manila which dumped several drums of lube oil into the Pasig River.

The investigation will be conducted by the PCG's Marine Environmental Protection Command.

An initial report from the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA) said the oil came from a ruptured pipe connecting a storage tank of Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. to the production area.

Nine drums of oil mixed with water have been recovered so far, but the exact volume of the spilled lube oil is still being determined, the LLDA said.

"Our goal is to make sure this incident is not repeated. We want to put corrective measures and enhance safety standards so no oil would be spilled again," PCG spokesperson Lt. Commander Joseph Coyme said.

He added that the PCG might impose a fine on Shell for the spill. The Department of Environment and Natural Resources could also impose penalties on the oil company for violating the Clean Water Act, Coyme said.

Roberto Kanapi, Shell spokesperson, said Saturday's incident was a "minor spill."

He explained that most of the lube oil which spilled out of the ruptured pipe went into the bund, a retainer canal around the tank which helps contain leaks.

"We still have to discuss the matter with the LLDA and the Coast Guard, although most of the spilled oil has already been recovered," he said in a phone interview with the INQUIRER.

In a statement, the PCG said it first spotted the spillage near its detachment at the Pureza riverbank in Manila at around noon Saturday. An oil spill reaction team subsequently traced the source of the leak to Pier C-2, Jetty A of the Shell Pandacan terminal.

PCG personnel then informed Shell's employees about the spill and directed them to clean it up.

The Coast Guard also placed a spill boom around the fuel to prevent it from further spreading.

Shell personnel at the Pandacan depot manually scooped the oil from the water. According to the Coast Guard, the cleanup was completed by 5:30 p.m. that same day.

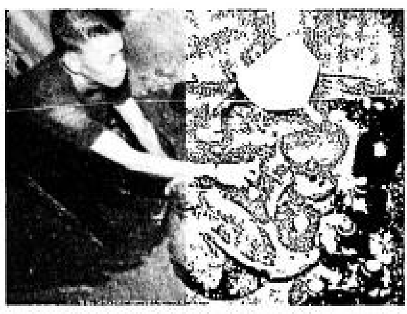
But in a statement yesterday, the LLDA said that "lube oil was visible at the Pasig River at the time of the inspection."

It also noted that the oil leak from the ruptured pipe was contained in a ditch leading to the three-chamber oil and water separator (OWS).

Shell has deployed around 90 people to monitor its OWS facility. It was also ordered to provide more spill boom to prevent the oil from leaking out of the OWS chamber.

WHAT'S INSIDE

2 killed, 8 hurt in 12-vehicle smashup in Tanay /A26



REM ZAMORA

Parañaque police adopts new tack in antidrug campaign /A26

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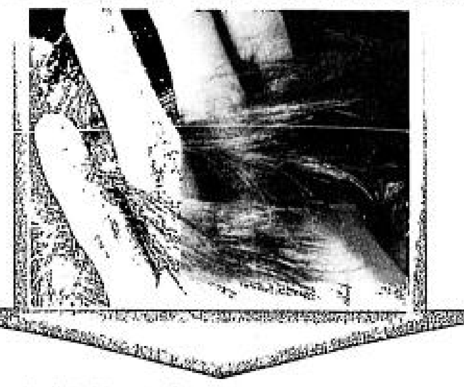

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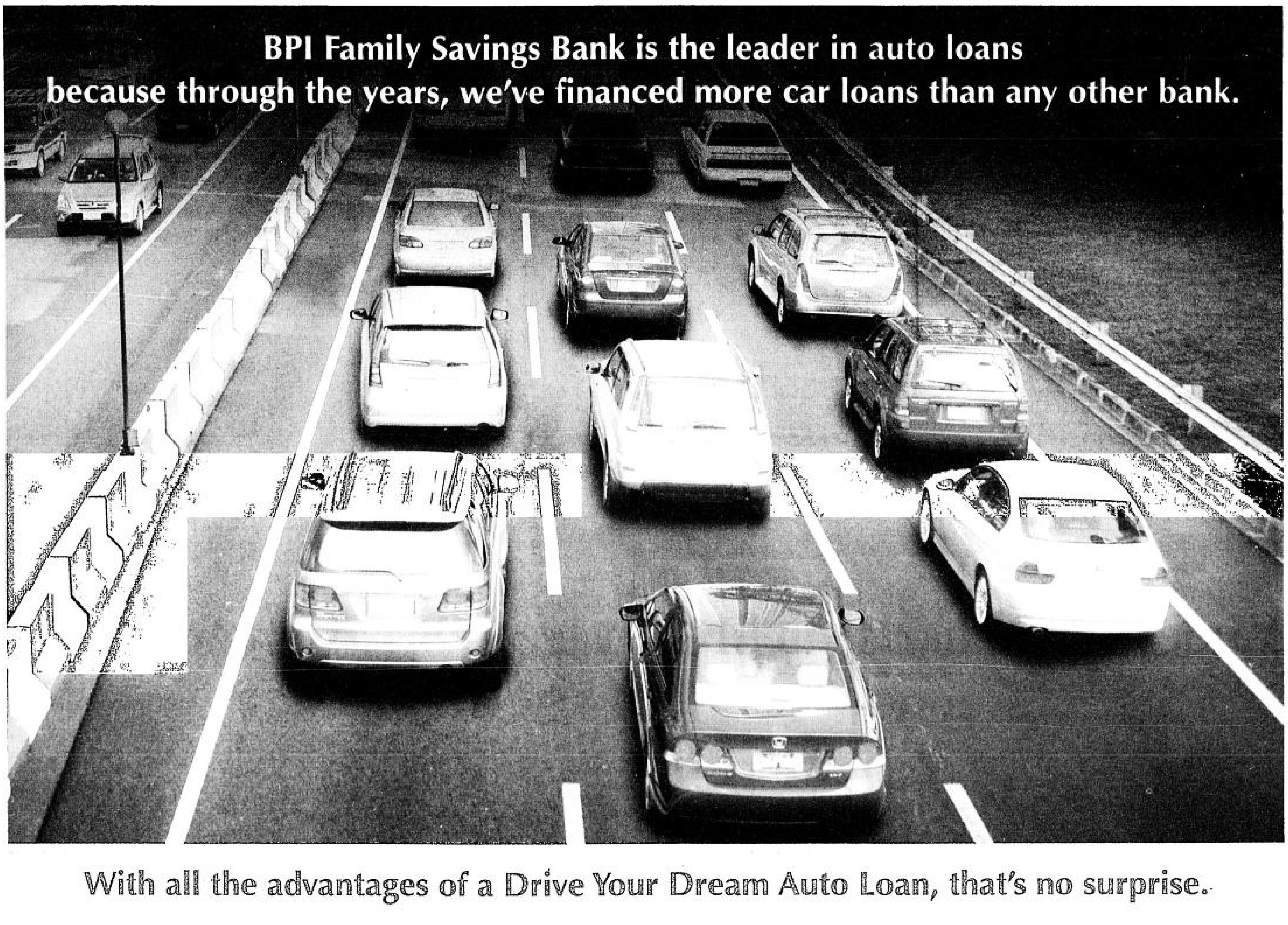
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Drive your Dream AUTO LOAN

2 killed, 8 injured in 12-vehicle smashup

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

RUBEN IGNACIO, 56, WAS DRIVING down a steep road in Taytay, Rizal yesterday morning when he saw the heavy traffic at the approaching intersection.

He stepped on the brakes to stop his truck which was carrying 800 bags of cement but nothing happened. His vehicle then plowed into the intersection, hitting at least a dozen vehicles and leaving two men dead. Eight more were injured in the incident.

Police chief Supt. Jaime Piloneo told the INQUIRER that the truck had come from Antipolo City and was on its way to Pasig City to deliver the bags of cement.

But while going down a steep road near Tikling Junction in Barangay Dolores, Ignacio lost control of the trailer truck at 7:15 a.m.

The truck rammed into a dozen vehicles caught in heavy traffic on the same lane, Piloneo said.

The truck first ran over two motorcycles, dragging for a few meters and instantly killing drivers Edwin Nava, 66 and Alvin Ebrole, 25, before hitting a delivery van.

The left side of the speeding truck also rammed into a tricycle full of passengers, before hitting a Honda Civic and a Toyota Corolla.

It then slammed into a Mazda pickup and sideswiped a Toyota Revo, before hitting four more vehicles.

Ignacio surrendered to policemen later.

IMAGINE LIFE
WITHOUT HOPE

NO TIME
A man walks along Roxas Boulevard, near Rizal Park in Manila without pausing to admire a colorful mural and its thought-provoking message.
EDWIN BACASMAS

DID YOU KNOW

Did you know?

BEFORE it became known as Roxas Boulevard, American colonizers had called that particular stretch of land Dewey Boulevard after George Dewey, who led the US victory against Spaniards in the 1898 Battle of Manila Bay. When the Japanese invaded the Philippines in the 1940s, they renamed the boulevard Heiwa, meaning peace. After the Japanese occupation, it was again called Dewey Boulevard. The road was named after former President Manuel Roxas in 1963, through Republic Act No. 3827. *Cyril L. Bonabente, PDI Research*

Slay victim's kin seeks hold order for Atienza assistant

By Tina G. Santos

THE FAMILY OF A JEEPNEY driver allegedly killed by Noli Sugay, a special assistant of Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, will ask the Department of Justice to issue a hold departure order (HDO) against the suspect.

"The family fears that Sugay might leave the country since a warrant of arrest has yet to be issued by the court," said lawyer William Merginio, who represents the family of victim Aries Luriz.

Sugay was formally charged with murder, two counts of homicide and illegal discharge of firearm before the DOJ on Monday.

He was also ordered suspended for 60 days by Atienza "to ensure impartiality in the investigation."

The mayor said that under the law, he cannot impose a suspension order of more than 60 days. He pointed out, however, that he can fire Sugay "if the investigation shows the evidence is clearly against him."

Sugay, whose job at the City Hall was mainly to receive complaints against barangay officials, policemen and city employees, has been working at the Office of the Mayor since 1999 and is only one of 20 special assistants.

Sugay was tagged by witnesses, including the victim's mother, brother and nine-year-old nephew, as the one who shot Luriz, 27, of Coral Street, Tondo over a petty parking dispute.

Luriz's elder brother, Alexander, told authorities that Sugay also threatened to shoot him and his mother Rosario when the incident happened last week.

Parañaque police adopts new tack in drugs drive

By Jocelyn R. Uy

APART FROM SUBDIVISIONS and villages, the Parañaque City police will now keep a watchful eye on all compounds and depots in the city to monitor persons suspected of being engaged in the illegal drugs trade.

City police chief Supt. Ronald Estilles said they would adopt this tack following Sunday's raid on the 12th shabu facility to be discovered in Parañaque.

"We will also include in our regular inspections compounds and trading companies to ensure that these are not used as drug facilities," Estilles told the INQUIRER yesterday.

Sunday's raid—which led to the seizure of hundreds of bottles of chemicals and equipment used in making metamphetamine hydrochloride or shabu from a warehouse on the Mayuga Compound, Pildera Street in Barangay Tambo—came as a surprise to the city police, he admitted.

The raid was carried out by operatives of the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG) based in Region III.

Destination

Senior Supt. Zoilo Lachica, Central Luzon CIDG chief, said they conducted the operation after receiving intelligence reports that a certain group from Parañaque was planning to transport the chemicals to Pampanga.

Five Taiwanese nationals were also arrested during the raid.

There have been 12 drug facilities discovered in the city since 2000. All were found in plush subdivisions and villages, prompting the police to give extra attention to beefing up security in these villages.

The local government even hired trained dogs to check on all motorists entering so-called "vulnerable" subdivisions.

"Now, we will monitor all compounds in the city especially those that have high fences," Estilles said. He added that they would also tap barangay officials for the drive since they were more familiar with residents in their areas.

Vulnerable

Mayor Florencio Bernabe, meanwhile, said the city was vulnerable to the illegal drug trade since it was near the international airport.

"Nevertheless, we have to adopt a new strategy. We also have to focus on other venues apart from subdivisions," Bernabe told the INQUIRER.

He said he would order the police to inspect all forwarding companies and their stockrooms to prevent the smuggling of illegal drugs into the city.

"But we will have to seek the owners' consent first before making the move," Bernabe added.

THE BIG FISH THAT DIDN'T GET AWAY
A group of boys show off the janitor fish they caught at the Tumana River in Marikina City. Although considered a pest by many fishermen, oil extracted from the janitor fish, based on an award-winning experiment conducted by 17-year-old student Raymond Amurao, could be used in making soap and biofuel.
JOAN BONDOC

Model homes to rise in fire-ravaged Port Area community

A GIRL looks at pictures of some of the beneficiaries of houses built by Gawad Kalinga, which has hooked up with Unilever, to build houses for 100 families in the Baseco Compound in Manila. REM ZAMORA

By Tina G. Santos

SEVERAL FAMILIES IN THE DEPRESSED community that makes up the Baseco Compound in Port Area, Manila have received an unexpected windfall.

From shacks made of old roofing sheets, many of them will soon be moving to small but decent homes.

The Baseco Compound is a sprawling 52-hectare community sitting on mostly reclaimed land. A lone bridge connects the compound to the City of Manila.

Part of the area, which was hit by a big fire in 2002 that left thousands of families homeless, is being redeveloped into a model community by multinational firm Unilever, the Manila City government and Gawad Kalinga, the social arm of the Catholic group Couples for Christ.

To be called Vitality Village, the place will be home to 100 families, said Unilever chair Howard Belton.

"We look forward to Baseco being full of vitality," Belton said during the project's groundbreaking rites held recently. "We share the mission of building the nation through creating peaceful and productive communities."

Vitality Village will be unique because it will be the first of its kind in Baseco to integrate commercial with residential units in one community to help solve the problem of unemployment in the area.

Integration

"A unique aspect of the project is to integrate the inclusion of mixed residential and commercial units" that will hopefully, provide jobs to residents in the area, said Chito Macapagal, Unilever general manager for corporate development.

Funding for the community, which will also have a daycare center, youth and sports area and plaza, will come from contributions from Unilever officials, employees and their spouses. Former workers of the firm will also be pitching in.

During the recent groundbreaking rites, they turned over P650,000 to Gawad Kalinga, an amount that was matched by the company, bringing the total donations to P1.3 million.

"This is just the first installment of our donation. We have been conducting various fundraising activities such as a 'white elephant' sale to raise more money for the project," he added.

Apart from the money, Macapagal said the firm's officials and employees would also help in the construction of the houses.

He added that they will start building 22 commercial and residential units and 38 standard row housing units—or a total of 60 structures on the compound.

The project is expected to be completed in two years.

Over 330 dead in Java tsunami

Rescuers in frantic search for survivors

PANGANDARAN, INDONESIA—Rescuers desperately sifted through wreckage Tuesday for survivors of a tsunami that killed more than 330 people and left dozens missing when it slammed into Indonesia's Java coast.

In a harrowing reminder of the 2004 disaster that left 220,000 dead across Asia, walls of water up to three meters high smashed ashore Monday, toppling buildings and sending thousands of terrified residents fleeing.

The tsunami was triggered by a 7.7-magnitude undersea earthquake off the south coast of Java island, where no early warning system had yet been put in place and many residents had no inkling of the tragedy to come.

Heff Martin, a 26-year-old Swiss office worker, said he and his fiancee had only moments to "think with clear heads and use common sense" to save their lives.

"There were people screaming outside the hotel, so one of the hotel staff went outside to see what was happening. He came back screaming, 'There is a wave, there is a wave. The sea is coming, the sea is coming!'" Martin recalled.

"We quickly ran to the second floor and soon the waves came in and crashed into the first floor ... We were there for about five minutes, and we went up to the rooftop by breaking through the ceiling."

At least 337 people were killed and 510 injured across six districts along Central and West Java provinces, the health ministry said.

Some 150 were still missing while 52,700 had been displaced by the surges of water, the head of the ministry's crisis center, Rustam Pakaya, told AFP.

Most deaths were in the resort area of Pangandaran in West Java's Ciamis district, about 270 km southeast of Jakarta, he said.

Agus Sutrisno, head of disaster relief in Ciamis, said more than 1,500 workers were combing coastal areas for survivors and bodies.

"We suspect there are still many people buried under the debris. We lack heavy equipment such as backhoes and electric chainsaws," he said.

A 26-year-old Frenchwoman previously thought dead was found alive, the French ambassador said in Jakarta, while Sweden's foreign ministry said one of its nationals had died in the disaster.

Hamed Abukhamiss, a 40-year-old Saudi Arabian covered in scratches and cuts, told AFP that he had brought the bodies of his wife and son to a hospital morgue himself.

"I don't know how I'm alive—it's a miracle," he told AFP, his voice quivering as he choked back tears.

The whereabouts of two Swedish children reported missing remained unknown.

Tsunami alerts were issued for parts of Indonesia and Australia but they did not reach the victims as no early warning system was in place.

"Our system is not yet working properly. We are still developing a communication system especially for the regions," Fauzi, an official working on the early warning project from the meteorology agency in Jakarta, told AFP.

A 24-year-old surfer Budi said he was offshore at Batu Keras beach, 30 km west of Pangandaran, when the quake struck.

"I couldn't feel anything and then about five minutes after the water subsided, the waves came," he told AFP.

Budi said he thought the ocean drawing back may have been a sign of the waves about to lash the coast, but many people began rushing out toward the withdrawing waters to look at fish flapping—an eerie reminder of the way many lives were claimed in December 2004.

An Australian teacher said the only warning he and his wife had at Pangandaran was an enormous roar.

"We heard this roar like a waterfall, a huge waterfall, coming closer and closer, and it was very, very windy," said Wayne Proctor, 46. "We ran out into the street and we could see water all over the street." *AFP*

A MAN wheels his bicycle past an area in Pangandaran, Indonesia, which was devastated by tsunami July 18.

REUTERS

A WOMAN cries as she sits in front of the ruins of her house in Pangandaran, Indonesia, July 18.

REUTERS

Tsunami survivors thank God

PANGANDARAN, INDONESIA—Heff Martin, a 26-year-old Swiss office worker, came to this quiet seaside resort with his Indonesian fiancee to bronze himself in the sun and enjoy the surf.

Standing inside a two-story mosque 12 hours after the killer waves swept through Pangandaran, wearing nothing but a pair of black swim trunks and with a white blanket wrapped round his chest, Martin is now just happy to be alive.

"I was very fearful, very afraid for my life and hers," Martin says, as he gestures to his 36-year-old fiancee Julia.

The exhausted woman, wearing a simple black dress and a blanket to cover her shoulders in the Muslim place of worship, says they survived only by the grace of God, who told her of the impending disaster in a vision.

"I got the sign. I am thankful to God that he warned me and my fiance because today was the first time since our arrival where we stayed at the hotel all day," she says with a sigh of relief.

The pair were among the lucky ones. At least 330 people were killed in Monday's tsunami, triggered by a strong undersea earthquake off the south coast of Java island. More than 125 others are missing.

Pangandaran, a sleepy vacation spot with one of the finest beaches in Java that is popular with both domestic and foreign tourists, is now a ghost town infused with the stench of death.

The beach and nearby streets are littered with chunks of concrete, wooden planks that were once food stalls and tiles ripped from hotel roofs. Boats are marooned on shore. Puddles of water lie everywhere.

"I was very nervous about where I should go, where I could find a safe place."

Ameta Fanara, the 39-year-old manager of the Uni Beach Hotel next to where Martin and Julia were staying, said even after the devastating 2004 Asian tsunami that killed 220,000 people, Monday's disaster shocked him. *AFP*

Israel vows to press on Gaza offensive

BEIT HANUN, GAZA STRIP—Israeli troops withdrew from the Gaza Strip town of Beit Hanun overnight, leaving behind a trail of damage, but the military vowed to continue its deadly offensive across the territory.

Israel has been operating inside the Gaza Strip for three weeks since June 28, when troops rolled back into the territory in a bid to find a soldier abducted by militants and halt rocket attacks.

At least 87 Palestinians and one Israeli soldier have been killed since the offensive began.

A two-day Israeli incursion into the sprawling northern town of Beit Hanun, the deepest offensive during the ground operation, ended overnight as troops withdrew to the land north and east of the town, Palestinian sources said.

Moshe Kaplinsky, Israel's deputy armed forces chief, said the so-called Summer Rain offensive would continue and that "other forces would take over from those who left Beit Hanun."

He said Cpl. Gilad Shalit, whose capture on June 25 sparked the offensive, and two other servicemen snatched by Hezbollah guerrillas last Wednesday were "alive" and that "we know where they are being held."

As morning came to Beit Hanun, where eight Palestinians have been killed by Israeli fire since Sunday, Sofian Hamed, the director general of the Hamas-run municipality, said 10 houses had been destroyed in the incursion.

Several other homes were damaged, as well as roads, water and sewage systems and electricity installations, he said.

A Palestinian security source said the Israeli troops had pulled back toward the border east and north of Beit Hanun.

"Now they're killing people twice, when we are living and when we're dead," said Mohammed Ibrahim, attending to his sister's grave in the Beit Hanun cemetery, partially destroyed in the offensive.

An army spokesperson confirmed that ground troops were still based in the northern Gaza Strip as well as in Dahaniya, in the south of the territory. *AFP*

WORLDBRIEFS

Gunmen kill over 50 in Iraq

BAGHDAD—Gunmen killed over 50 people in an attack around a crowded market in a violent town near Baghdad on Monday, one of the bloodiest incidents in Iraq this year. Officials and residents in Mahmudiya, as well as the US military whose troops were later on the scene, said gunmen, apparently numbering in dozens, stormed the market in the religiously mixed town after a barrage of mortars and grenades. The Defense Ministry said two car bombs went off first. Accounts from the scene stressed the main attack was from gunmen on foot, tossing grenades and firing on people. The local hospital said it took in 58 dead and over 70 wounded. Shops and cars were left ablaze. State television put the death toll at 70 and showed footage of the burned out remains of vehicles and market stalls along a deserted street. *Reuters*

Space shuttle lands in Florida

CAPE CANAVERAL—The US space shuttle Discovery landed smoothly in Florida on Monday, ending a successful 13-day mission that Nasa hopes will return the US-built shuttles to regular space flights three years after the Columbia disaster. Double sonic booms thundered over central Florida as the shuttle glided through partly cloudy skies toward a 5-km runway at the Kennedy Space Center. Commander Steve Lindsey gently steered the shuttle through a series of turns to slow the winged spacecraft down before landing at 9:14 a.m., capping an 8.6-million km journey. "It was an enormously successful flight," Nasa administrator Michael Griffin told a post-landing news conference. "We're back on track." *Reuters*

Honors to Korean scientist withdrawn

SEOUL—The South Korean government on Tuesday withdrew honors awarded to disgraced cloning expert Hwang Woo-suk and six colleagues as his research was faked, officials said. The decision was reached at a Cabinet meeting presided over by Prime Minister Han Myeong-sook, the officials at the Prime Minister's Office said. "The government decided to deprive Hwang and six others of the medals as their stem cell research was bogus," said Min Jin-kee, an official in charge of decorations at the Prime Minister's Office. The six included four Seoul National University professors, as well as the head of a private infertility hospital and a professor at Hanyang University. *AFP*

Civil resistance set in Mexico

MEXICO CITY—A campaign of civil resistance by leftists to force a recount in Mexico's disputed presidential election will start this week, taking the US ally further down the road of crisis. Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador, the leftist who lost the July 2 vote by a hair's breadth, said high-profile actions to bring attention to his claims of fraud and demands for a recount were imminent. "As of today, we will work out the plan and what I can say is that the first civil-resistance actions will begin this week," he told a left-wing radio station. Lopez Obrador lost the July 2 election to conservative Felipe Calderon by some 240,000 votes, out of over 41 million cast, and he claims widespread fraud. Leftist leaders refused to say what kind of protests were planned by Lopez Obrador, who pulled a crowd of hundreds of thousands of supporters at a demonstration on Sunday. Manuel Camacho Solis, a main political adviser to the leftist, said some of the actions would not be announced in advance to maintain an element of surprise. *Reuters*

Police pinpoint explosives used in Bombay blasts

MUMBAI (BOMBAY)—INDIAN police Monday said a rare mixture of explosives was used in the Bombay train bombings but refused to pin blame on any group for the rush-hour blasts that killed 182 people and injured nearly 900.

Inquiry head K.P. Raghuvanshi told reporters that analysis of small amounts of bomb debris revealed they were made up of powerful RDX explosive, ammonium nitrate and fuel oil.

He declined to identify any group that could have put together such a device but said those behind the blasts were likely to be both home-grown militants and elements from "beyond the border."

Officers have yet to make arrests amid few signs of a breakthrough in finding the July 11 bombers but have said they had identified two suspects. Raghuvanshi said the slow-moving inquiry had reached a "critical" stage.

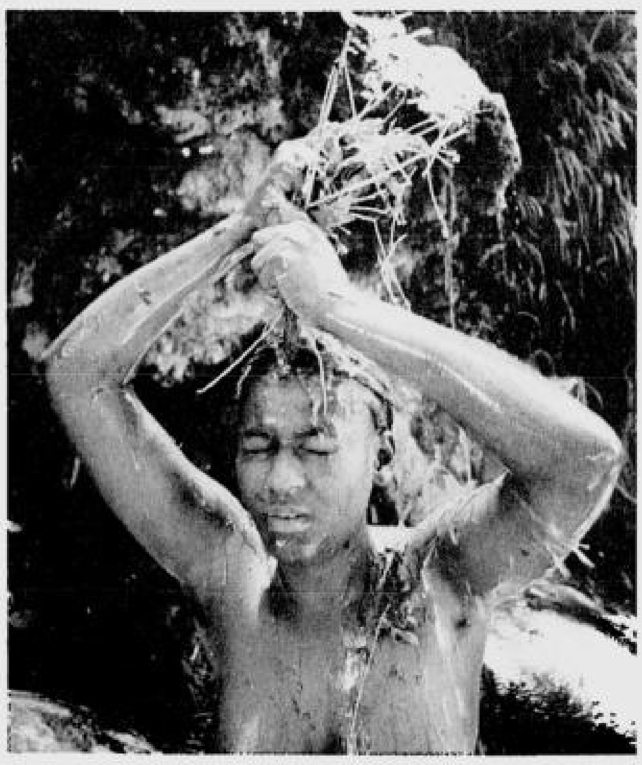
"Investigations are going slowly, I don't want to rush," Raghuvanshi told reporters. "I don't want to put any organization behind this at the moment."

The blasts, the worst such attack in India for 13 years, have prompted sharp exchanges between Pakistan and India. New Delhi has suggested the bombers had support from across the border, a claim denied by Islamabad.

Investigators said the attacks bore the hallmarks of Lashkar-e-Taiba, a group fighting Indian rule in Kashmir, which was being scrutinized along with Bombay-based Islamic militants.

Raghuvanshi said Monday police had failed to find a man known as Rahil who was believed to have been involved in bomb attacks in Delhi last October blamed on Lashkar-e-Taiba that left at least 60 dead.

Police said they were still looking at many groups and have drafted in retired officers to help in the inquiry. Lashkar-e-Taiba has denied involvement. *AFP*



VOODOO RITUAL

AP

A voodoo faithful bathes near a waterfall with aromatic leaves during an annual voodoo pilgrimage in Haiti to seek deliverance from poverty.

The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Israel pounds Lebanon for 7th day

Massive ground assault imminent; thousands of foreigners flee

BEIRUT—ISRAELI JETS HIT LEBANESE ARMY bases and flattened homes in a deadly new blitz of air strikes Tuesday, the seventh day of an assault that has killed at least 230 people and sent tens of thousands of people fleeing for their lives.

Helicopters, ferries and cruise liners were being commandeered to pick up foreign nationals trapped in the fighting between Israel and Lebanese Hezbollah guerrillas, in one of the biggest evacuations since World War II.

Despite a proposal for an international force to try to halt to the deadliest cross-border violence in decades and prevent an all-out regional war, the United Nations has so far failed to agree on a call for a ceasefire.

Lebanon's grim body count continued to mount, with 11 soldiers and at least three civilians killed and several families trapped and feared dead under the rubble of houses pulverized by Israeli missiles.

Combat jets also bombarded the Beirut-Damascus highway, cutting off the main land route used by people trying to flee, and blocking a convoy of ambulances.

Israel said it has not ruled out a massive ground offensive on its northern neighbor in a bid to crush the Hezbollah militia, which it has branded part of an "axis of terror" along with arch-enemies Tehran and Damascus and the Palestinian militant group Hamas.

In a tit-for-tat cycle of violence, Hezbollah has kept up a relentless barrage of rocket fire on northern Israel that has killed 12 civilians and wounded dozens more in a week.

A UN team was in Jerusalem on Tuesday on the latest leg of a mission to try to work out a truce while Secretary of State Kofi Annan fleshed out plans for an international force he said could help Beirut get a grip on Hezbollah, which effectively controls southern Lebanon.

Israel launched the all-out assault against Lebanon following Hezbollah's capture of two soldiers last Wednesday, battering the militant group's power base in Beirut's southern suburbs and hitting targets across the country.

The international airport has been knocked out, ports bombed, bridges destroyed, power stations set ablaze and houses turned to rubble in scenes reminiscent of the country's devastating 1975-1990 civil war.

Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Siniora, who has described his country as a disaster zone, issued a new appeal for a ceasefire, accusing Israel of trying to "send Lebanon back 50 years."

Israel, which has sent ground troops back into Lebanon for the first time since it ended its occupation in May 2000, warned that its offensive could last at least another week—emboldened by strong public support at home.

"We will strike anyone who would strike at us and any terrorist infrastructure, until Hezbollah and Hamas cease attacking us," Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said, declaring that Israel was facing a "moment of truth." *AFP*

YOUNG French girls pass the time by playing with their mother's hair on board a Greek ferry charted by the French government to evacuate its citizens from Lebanon July 18. AFP

Shell V-Power puts a splash of Ferrari in your car

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corporation recently launched the new Shell V-Power. Racing enthusiasts, car lovers and ordinary drivers alike can now experience the fuel that powers Ferrari in their very own cars. Formulated by the same Shell scientists who develop Ferrari's Formula 1 racing fuels, Shell V-Power is designed to help the car's engine produce maximum power.

"Shell V-Power is a Ferrari-inspired fuel that provides responsiveness from the first fill and allows for a smooth and clean driving experience," said Carl Posadas, Local Implementer, Fuels Category Management-Philippines & North Pacific Islands. "It brings together the technical expertise of Shell and Ferrari in a product that is designed for drivers like you and me. Now, with Shell V-Power, a car is not just any car; rather, it's a car that moves better, giving you that exhilarating driving experience, almost as if you were driving in the F1 races. Clearly, Shell V-Power exists to give you that added kick and sustained power, when you want it, for that exhilarating sense of freedom while driving".

Developed and re-designed by Shell Global Solutions, Shell V-Power is uniquely formulated for the Philippine market. V-Power is intended to help a car's engine perform at its best while helping keep the engine free from deposits. It can be used by all cars that run on unleaded gasoline.

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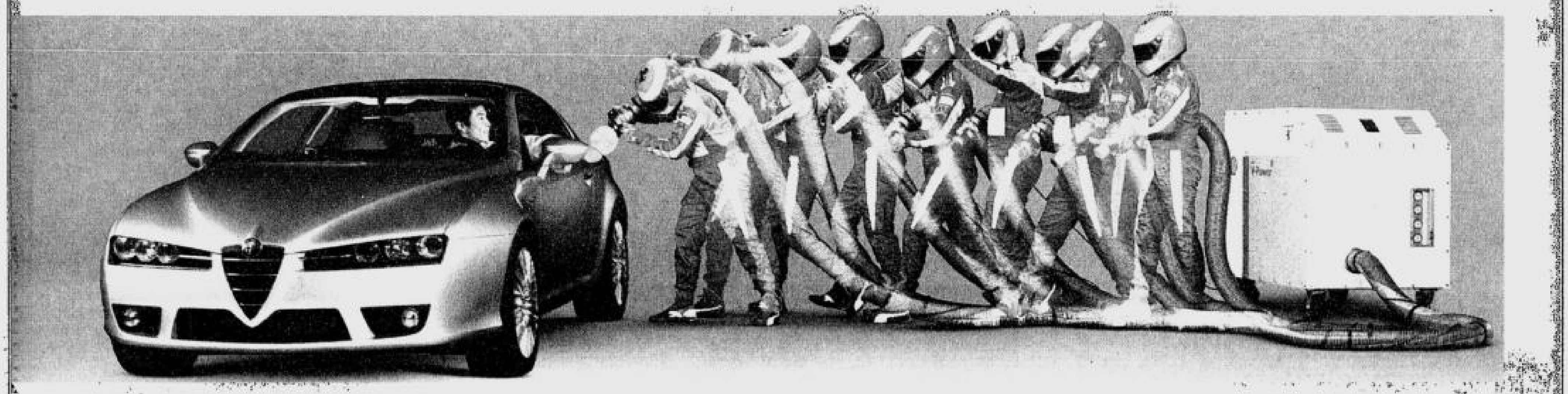

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Giants seek clincher vs Bulls tonight

PURFOODS WOULD RATHER KEEP A LOW profile than gloat over its current situation in the Philippine Basketball Association Finals.

Without being too confident, the Giants aim to take home the coveted Gran Matador Brandy-Philippine Cup trophy tonight at the Araneta Coliseum after moving a game shy of ending the best-of-seven championship series just a week back.

"The right approach is to think that this game could be our last, like there's no more tomorrow," said Purefoods coach Ryan Gregrorio after the Giants took a 3-1 lead with a 99-81 rout of Red Bull in Game 4.

That has been the mind-set of the Giants since the series opened and four games later, the same attitude has worked wonders for Gregorio's objective of nailing a second title in his young coaching career.

"We're up 3-1 but remember, it takes four wins to win the series," Gregorio said.

That could very well be the same mantra in the Red Bull dugout, except that the conviction will come from the sheer need to stay alive.

The Bulls need to sweep the remaining three games to win the title, and no team has done that since Ginebra did it at the expense of Shell during the 1991 First Conference Finals.

"Winning three straight games is not impossible," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao, who is seeking his first-ever all-Filipino crown in 15 years.

"Maybe it's improbable but we don't care about probabilities. We'll just try to go for three wins."

It can be done. But first, Guiao and the Bulls will have to lay down a sure-fire formula for the remainder of the series.

Limiting season MVP James Yap and Kerby Raymundo is on top of the agenda. Another concern is how to stop Marc Pingris and Richard Yee from wrecking the shaded area whenever the Bulls collapse on the Giants' 1-2 offensive punch.

There's also Noy Castillo, Paul Artadi, Rey Evangelista and Peter June Simon providing problems for the Bulls in the backcourt. Jun Limpot, who hasn't tasted a championship in his 13-year career, is also playing the game of his life.

"We have to make sure that we don't lose our sharpness," said Gregorio. "We're not going to look for other people to carry the cudgels for us."

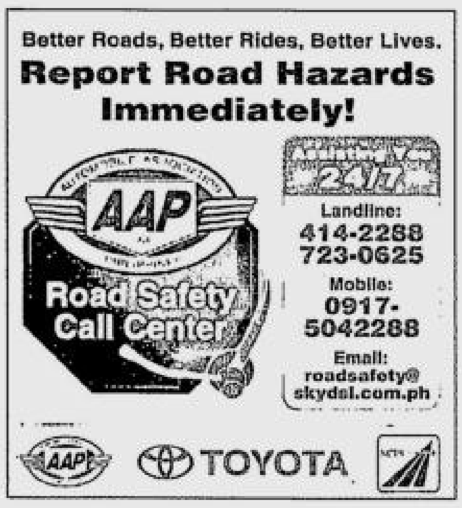
While the one-week break was a welcome respite for the Giants, the Bulls felt it wasn't really necessary.

June Navarro

PUREFOODS' Jun Limpot tries to block the shot of Red Bull's Enrico Villanueva in Game 4. ERIK ARAZAS

GAME TODAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
7:10 p.m.—Red Bull vs Purefoods (Game 5 of Finals)
Game 1—Purefoods d. Red Bull, 101-97
Game 2—Purefoods d. Red Bull, 93-82
Game 3—Red Bull d. Purefoods, 89-79
Game 4—Purefoods d. Red Bull, 99-81

WHAT'S INSIDE
- Alps to give Landis idea of his chances /A30
- Tim takes it to extra time–and likes what he's got /A32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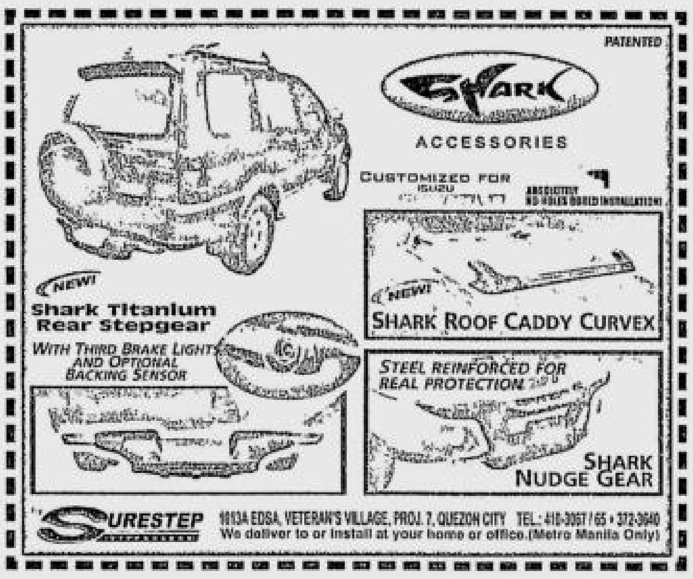
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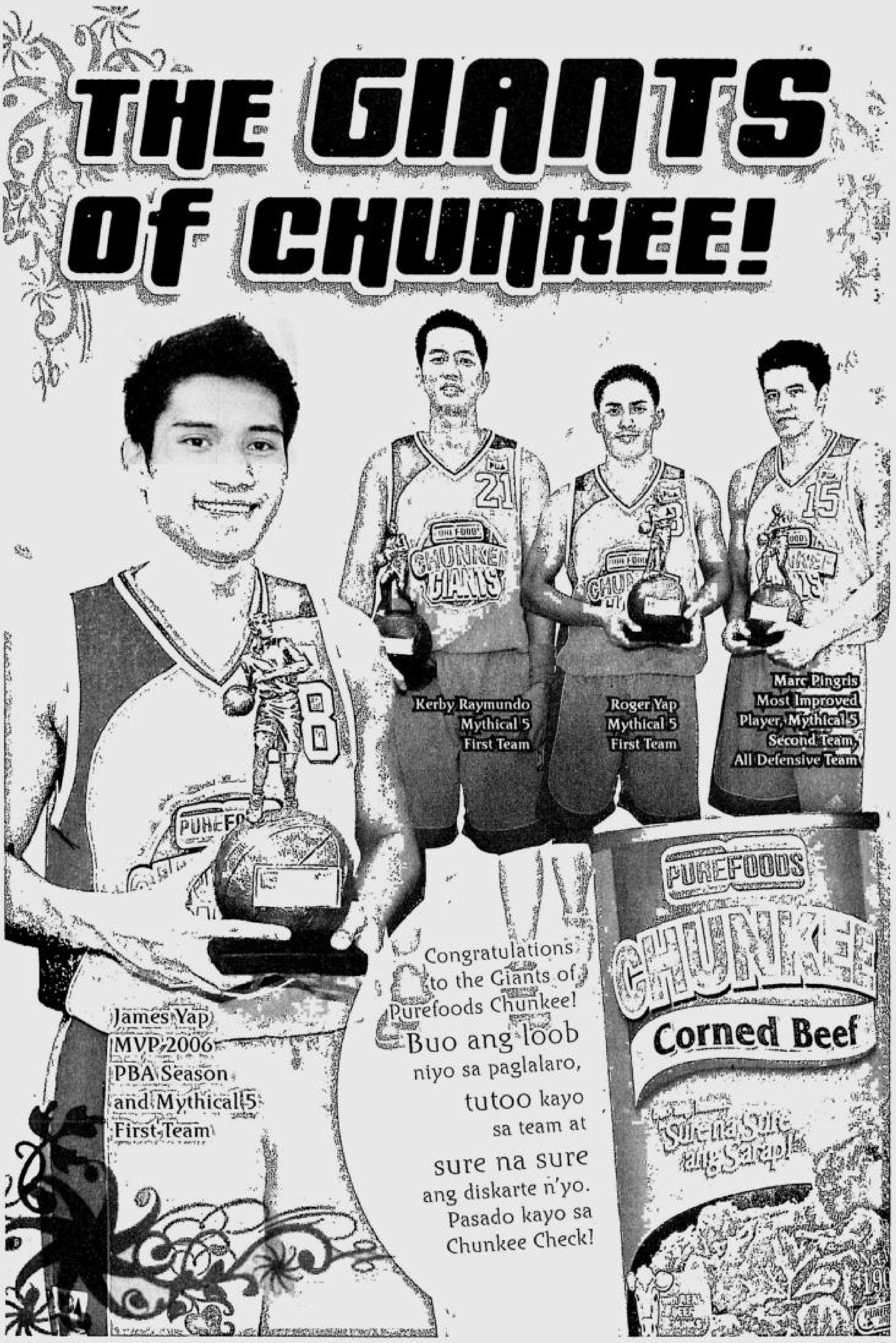
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Buo ang loob niyo sa paglalaro, tutoo kayo sa team at sure na sure ang diskarte n'yo. Pasado kayo sa Chunkee Check!
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Sure na Sure ang Sarap!

NCAA suspects game-fixing, seeks NBI help—again

By Marc Anthony Reyes

ARE GAME-FIXERS MANIPULATING the results of NCAA men's basketball?

That's what the league is trying to find out as it prepares to send fresh evidence to the National Bureau of Investigation this week, according to league sources yesterday.

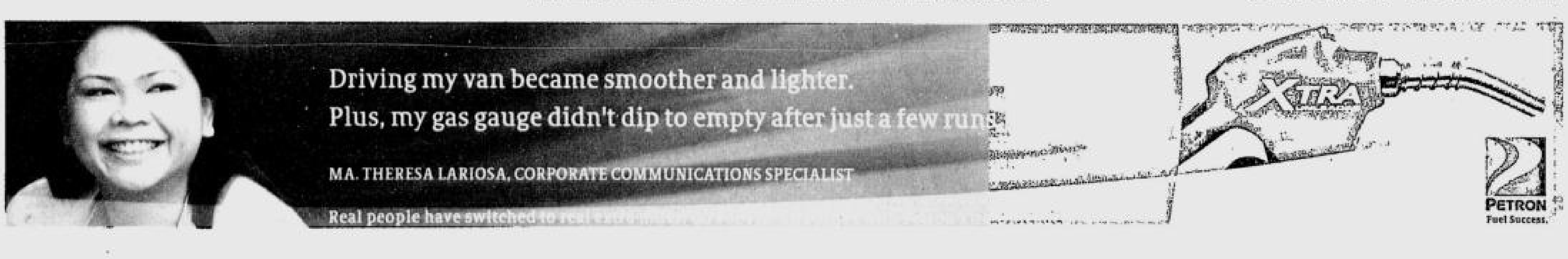
The league's management committee (Mancom), the sources said, will ask the NBI to study the videotape of the Jose Rizal-St. Benilde match Monday night at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium where the Heavy Bombers pulled of their first win in six starts.

The object of their suspicion is a group of "Chinese-looking" men at courtside who were seen making "excessive phone calls" just before the game ended. Some of them were seen using two cell phones at the same time.

The Heavy Bombers led by as many as 17 points in the third quarter and took a 12-point edge into the the fourth. The Blazers lost by just two points, triggering speculations that the game was rigged so JRU would still win by a "small-plus."

Players on both teams and game officials might have been part of the "deal," the sources said.

NCAA/ A32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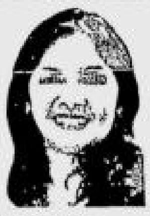
Yap, Pacquiao share a secret

In Huddle



Beth Celis

THE DATE FOR THE surgery has not been determined. It's not certain if 2006 PBA MVP James Yap will have his nose operation before or after his vacation in the United States with spouse Kris Aquino.

No, silly, he's not having a nose job. James' profile is near-perfect.

He's having a bothersome polyp in the nasal passage excised.

The polyp gave Kris a big scare a few days ago, when James' nose bled profusely. This went on and off for three days and left the couple worried since the bleeding seemed to be triggered by physical stress.

That was before Game 4 of the ongoing Gran Matador Brandy-PBA Philippine Cup championship series.

* * *

"Ang lakas ng bleeding, nakakatakot," Kris said.

The doctors' diagnosis somewhat allayed the couple's worst fears. The bleeding was traced to the presence of a polyp inside James' nose. It will have to go, sooner or later.

Meantime, James is taking the advice of boxing icon Manny Pacquiao, who has disclosed to the cager what he believes is the secret recipe for his extraordinary strength.

"Chicken *tinola* with lots of *malunggay* leaves. Manny said I should take it a day before and on game day. According to him, the secret is in the *malunggay*. He swears by it," James said.

Bet you can guess James' *ulam* today and yesterday.

* * *

Speaking of Manny, I blushed a bit when PDI columnist Recah Trinidad, author of "Pacific Storm," asked if it was medically alright for a woman to have sex two weeks after giving birth.

Recah posed the question to his lady-guests, during the launch of the Pacquiao book at the National Bookstore in Shangri-La Mall, last week. He was talking about an interview with Manny's mistress, Joan Bacosa, who said that Manny visited her two weeks after she had given birth to their son Emmanuel.

During the visit, Joan said they did it. The complete account is in Recah's book.

To answer Recah's question, I know of a couple who did it 10 days after a normal delivery, stitches and all.

* * *

Is it true that Fil-Ams Joe de Vance, Kelly Williams and Rob Reyes, who all have applied for the 2006-07 PBA draft, had failed to complete the documents required in time for the deadline?

I'm told that the PBA has extended the deadline to July 31 to give the three potential top picks more time to fulfill the eligibility requirements, which will have to be approved by the PBA board.

The annual draft is scheduled on Aug. 20 at Market Market, The Fort.

* * *

The Living Legend, Robert Jaworski, and Red Bull team owner George Chua must be very good friends.

During the PBA MVP Awards Night, where Jawo was the special guest, the former senator hopped over the ringside railings just to say hello to George, who was seated some rows behind the Red Bull bench.

I caught up with the Big J later at the Araneta Coliseum's gazebo, but I didn't get anything substantial about his plans. Neither did Ronnie Nathanielsz who must have spent an hour chatting with the basketball icon.

The Big J talked about the importance of good education to the girl who was with me, strongly advising her to "study well."

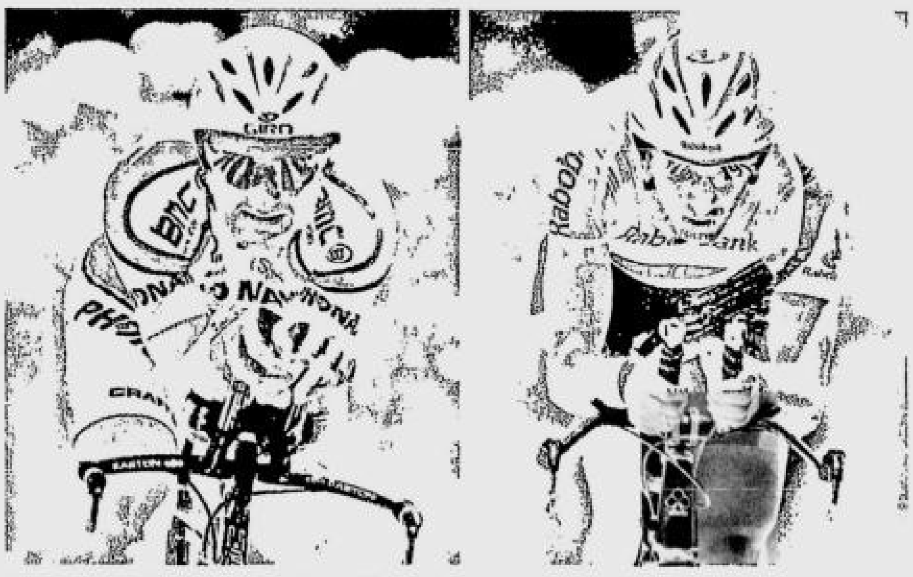
* * *

HOOPVINE: My colleague Ronnie Nathanielsz and my son Raymond have accused me of committing a grievous sin of omission. Ronnie said I failed to include Viva talent Mark Bautista on my list of performers during Manny V. Pangilinan's birthday concert. Raymond, on the other hand, couldn't understand how I could have overlooked his idol Joey Generoso, lead vocalist of the Side-A band. So sorry, guys… Can't confirm persistent talk of an impending rigodon of PBA coaches for the next season. All we can do is wait and see… Just before the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals left for Los Angeles, the team's PBA governor Ricky Vargas signed up Donbel Belano to another 3-year contract. The Phone Pals, so far, have won one game and lost another in the Los Angeles summer tournament.

RP women next to Everest

IT'S THE LADIES' TURN TO SCALE THE SUMMIT OF the world's highest mountain. The people behind the successful Philippine Mount Everest Expedition Team are again sending a crack Filipino squad to climb the Himalayan mountain next year that will include three young but daring women in Carina Dayondon, Janet Belarmino and former dragon boat national team member Noelle Wenceslao. Art Valdes, head of the team, made the announcement yesterday in a special session of the PSA Forum at the Pantalan Restaurant in Manila that was graced by no less than Leo Oracion and Erwin Pastor Emata, the first two Filipino mountain climbers to reach the Mount Everest summit.

Alps to give Landis idea of his



FLOYD Landis (left) considers Denis Menchov his main rival in the Alps. REUTERS

GAP, FRANCE—FLOYD LANDIS KNOWS the Alps well—he sweated up enough steep mountain climbs to help Lance Armstrong clinch three of his seven Tour de France wins.

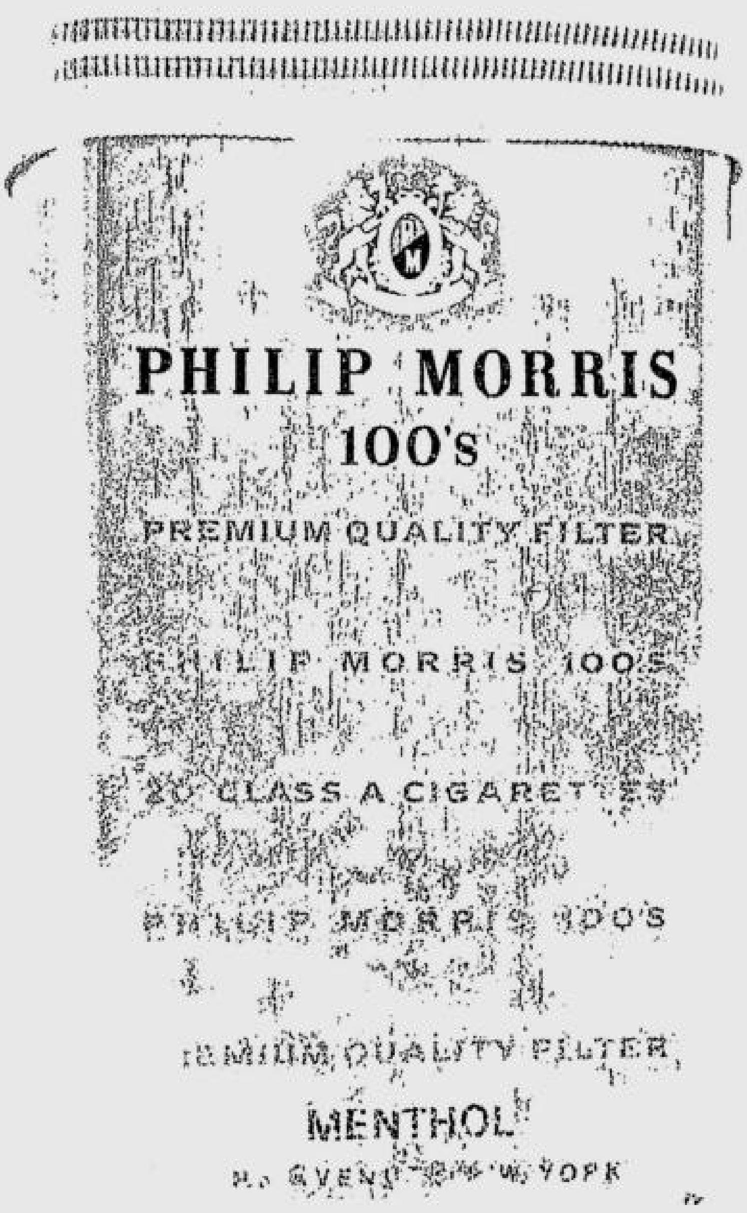
With Armstrong retired, Landis is now a main contender for Tour victory as leader of the Phonak team. With the three-week race entering the Alps, the final stretch will soon be in sight.

By the end of Tuesday's 15th stage, which winds through 21 sharp bends to finish at the summit of the famed L'Alpe d'Huez, Landis will have a clearer idea if he has what it takes to win.

Stuck in Armstrong's shadow at US Postal, Landis dreamed long enough about it.

"I always believed I could do it from the beginning," Landis said Monday. "I've proved I'm strong enough to win the Tour."

Second-placed Landis feels he can
make up the 1 minute, 29 secon
on overall race leader Oscar Per
"My objective is to get to the
without losing too much time
said during a rest day in Gap.
confident in my time-trialing ab
At this stage, Landis says, w
leader's yellow jersey is irreleva
"I have to stay focused on th
ture, rather than think of livin
ment," he said. "That wouldn't h
Landis, who sits eight second
Cyril Dessel of France, is
Pereiro will wilt in the Alps, and
his main rival to be Denis Menc
Rabobank team—who is 61 se
hind in fourth place.
"Menchov is the guy I have
the most," Landis said.
Pereiro, meanwhile, is tipped
gle in the coming days.
"We will see how he goes th
Alps," said Alejandro Valverde.



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D'Epargne-Illes Balears teammate of Pereiro, whose Tour ended on stage 3 with a broken right collarbone.

"He has to resist, but with tranquility and without any pressure," Valverde added.

Peace and tranquility are qualities best associated with Alpine treks for tourists, not cyclists, and some of the Tour passes are so tough they can end a rider's race.

The pressure, and hot sun, are sure to be intense on Tuesday and over two more days of painful Alpine routes, with several steep climbs in one of the most unpredictable races in years.

A far cry from the recently ended Armstrong era, where Postal patrolled the mountains, chasing down and swallowing up pretenders to the Texan's title.

This year, however, riders as far down as 11th-place Yaroslav Popovych of Discovery Channel could still be in contention. *AP*

China hoops pins Olympic medal hopes on Wang, Yao combination

YAO: Nursing broken foot AFP

WANG: Current leading scorer AFP

BEIJING—CHINA IS MULLING A Yin and Yang strategy for the upcoming World Basketball Championships, based on the inside and outside games of Yao Ming and Wang Zhizhi, known together as the "Walking Great Wall."

The current national side is banking on the domineering skills of NBA All Star Yao to command the center position, while 2.14 meter (seven foot-one-inch) sharp-shooting Wang keeps defenders from collapsing on Yao by hoisting up three pointers from the perimeter.

The World Championships, which begin in Japan on Aug. 19, will be the first time that the 2.26 meter Yao has played with Wang since 2001, not long after the "Walking Great Wall" nickname was coined for China's seven-foot basketball players.

The media have called Yao "the sun," or the Yang essence in the traditional Chinese philosophy on maintaining balance, while Wang is being called "the moon,"or the Yin essence.

However, key to Yao's participation will be whether or not he can fully recover from a broken foot sustained in a Houston Rocket match in April.

With Yao recovering, Wang has led the team with averages of 20 points and 10 rebounds per game during a recent series of warm up matches in Italy, where he scored 44 points against Japan in one game and notched 19 first-half points against Italy. *AFP*

Who's poisoning whom at PSC?

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

WE'VE HEARD some of the weirdest stories from the Philippine Sports Commission, but nothing beats this one.

To start with, there was this announcement that the PSC had decided to scrap the athletes' meal allowance during international campaigns.

"They get free board and lodging during these foreign stints, so there's no need anymore to provide them meal allowances," PSC commissioner Ritchie Garcia was quoted as having said in a meeting with Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose Cojuangco.

Garcia may have a point there; although it has been the practice through the years to provide athletes a little pocket money whenever they go out to compete in international events like the Olympics and the Asiad.

Garcia claimed the PSC has no money. Period.

Nothing weird there, either.

* * *

Now, listen to this report carried in the Malaya sports section on Monday: "Some 50 national athletes fell ill, possibly victims of food poisoning, following a meeting with PSC chair William Ramirez last Friday. Ironically, the victims met with Ramirez to protest, among others, the PSC decision to scrap the athletes' meal allowances during international competitions."

The report added that the athletes, among them medalists of the 2005 Southeast Asian Games and some preparing for the Asian Games in Doha, Qatar, in December, started to suffer from vomiting and loose bowel movement, after partaking of food served during the consultation.

Some of the affected players had required hospitalization due to severe stomach pains and dizziness.

* * *

The PSC was being candid when it claimed it had no money for meal allowances.

Of course, you've also heard of that famous incident about Mary Antoinette prescribing cake for poor citizens following a severe shortage of bread in old France.

No. This is not meant to suggest something sinister, but the timing—the PSC funds shortage and the subsequent food poisoning—was anything but funny.

PSC chair Ramirez, criticized by both the national athletes and national sports associations for scrapping the $30 daily allowance of athletes in overseas meets, was spared the ordeal.

Said the Malaya report: "Ramirez did not join the athletes in the brunch, which included *pancit palabok* and *bibingka*. He reportedly flew to Davao on an official trip after turning down the athletes' pleas."

* * *

Yesterday, it was reported that PSC commissioner Leon Montemayor has ordered an investigation into the reported food poisoning incident.

"This is very alarming. We're talking here of the health and safety of national athletes, who are the responsibility of the PSC. We need an assurance that it does not happen again," Montemayor said.

Annie Ruiz, chief of the PSC for NSAs Affairs, would not divulge where her office bought the *palabok* and *puto*, suspected to have been the causes of last Friday's food poisoning incident.

Meanwhile, it could not be immediately determined how much in allowances our dedicated sports officials would be getting when they accompany our poor athletes to the forthcoming Asian Games.

No money. But expect the corrupt among these officials to get all the free dollars they could take. They would also have enough free time to play tourist, unlike the hardworking athletes.

Another thing: There's no assurance there would be more athletes than Filipino officials when they take that plane to Doha in December.

SJC derby 2nd round set

THE SHOWDOWN AMONG LOCAL AND FOREIGN cockfight enthusiasts resumes today at San Juan Coliseum as the second round of "Rambulan 5-cock derby" fires off at 5 p.m. A purse of P3.5 million awaits the winners in this six-day event sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Entry fee is P8,800. Cockers who wish to join may call 7256563, 7255369 or 0917-8041691 for inquiries.

Makati 'Salpukan' today

THE LAST BATCH OF PARTICIPANTS IN MAKATI Coliseum's "Salpukan Sa Taglugon 5-cock derby." plunges into action today and will be aiming for the last tickets to the finals. So far, 41 cockers with two points apiece entered the championship round on July 22 in the event sponsored by B-Meg Ace. Winners stand to receive P2 million plus a brand-new Ford Escape. For details, call 8963545 and 8956475

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Morales lambasts Roach

MORALES

ROACH

MEXICAN RING ICON ERIC "EL TERrible" Morales yesterday lambasted Manny Pacquiao's renowned trainer Freddie Roach, branding the American strategist as someone "never good enough to be in a big fight."

Morales, in an interview with the boxing website Fightnews, was reacting to recent comments made by Roach while he was in Manila.

Roach purportedly labeled the Mexican future Hall of Famer as "a nasty guy, who has spoken very bad of the Filipino people."

The American was also reported as having said, "I can't wait to beat this man [Morales] again," referring to the third showdown on Nov. 18 between Pacquiao and Morales.

"I have never insulted the Filipino people in my life," said Morales. "To the contrary, I believe that they are, as well as Mexican fans, very loyal to their boxers and have a well-grounded knowledge of boxing, and they support the sport like few others.

Morales also said he "respected" Pacquiao "as a fighter."

"I have never put Pacquiao's greatness as a warrior in doubt," the Mexican said. "I mentioned in some interviews what I believed were his weaknesses, but I never said that I don't respect him, because that is not true. I do respect him as a fighter."

Asked why he lost to Pacquiao in January, Morales said he "was over-confident after beating him so easily the first time," and "I made some mistakes in my training camp that I will not make again."

"It is insulting to me that Roach wants to put words in my mouth," said Morales. "If he can't wait to see Manny try to beat me again, just tell him that Nov. 18 will be here soon enough."

Morales said he is sad to see former fighters like Roach who are now trainers "wanting to take center stage in a big fight, because they were never good enough to be in a big fight." *Salven L. Lagumbay, contributor*

NCAA suspects game-fixing, seeks NBI help

From page A29

The game happened when the NBI agents who regularly watch the games have already left the venue.

"We have been watching over these people, along with the NBI, for quite some time," said one of the sources. "I don't know why it happened when they were [agents] were not there."

NCAA Mancom chief Bernie Atienza said there are 6-12 tickets reserved for NBI agents every game day for the purpose of eradicating game-fixing.

The league also sought NBI assistance last year to dispel rumors that a group of people were fixing the results of some matches.

"We can only speculate because it's a very, very hard thing to prove," said Atienza of host St. Benilde. "Now the best we could do is to make them aware that we know what they are up to."

Meanwhile, San Beda, making its strongest title campaign in 27 years, faces Perpetual Help today at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

The Red Lions (4-1) are gunning for their fourth straight win.

Jose Rizal, which finally posted its first win in five games last Monday, will collide with San Sebastian (2-4) in the other seniors match.

STANDINGS	W	L
Letran	5	0
San Beda	4	1
PCU	4	2
Mapua	3	2
S. Sebastian	2	4
Perpetual	2	4
Jose Rizal	1	4
St. Benilde	1	5

GAMES TODAY (*Ninoy Aquino Stadium*)

12 noon—Jose Rizal vs. SSC (Jrs/Srs)

4 p.m.—Perpetual Help vs. San Beda (Srs/Jrs)

Tim takes it to extra time —and likes what he's got

TIM CONE: Loyalty factor AUGUST DELA CRUZ

By Francis Ochoa

THE LAST TIME TIM CONE EVER FELT WORRIED about his job was late 1993, when things were going so bad for Alaska—and when very few people had little inkling that the following year, the Aces would start a dynasty that would fill newspaper spaces for a decade.

So he was in for a little jolt of surprise—and a tinge of nostalgia—when he read in the papers Monday morning that he was again tip-toeing at the edge of unemployment.

"I woke up to that (reports)," said the Grand Slam mentor, one of only four coaches to have won three PBA titles in a single season. "It came quite as a surprise, to be honest with you."

Surprise, mainly because by that time, he already had a contract signed with the Aces. Nostalgia? Only because somebody reminded him that he thought he was about to be fired in 1993.

The one thing he felt little of, though, was worry.

"Well, there was that slight concern," he admitted. "After all, when your contract runs out, you always have to worry. Especially because the PBA's still about business."

If it were, indeed, nothing more than business, then Cone had already invested enough to assure himself of another shot at reviving the Alaska dominance that once left everybody else settling for footnotes in the '90s: He has 11 championships and ranks No. 2 among coaches, second only to Baby Dalupan's 15. Those 11 championships have put Alaska at No. 3 in the all-time list, behind San Miguel's 17 and Crispa's 13.

But the Aces have also made their mark by putting a personal touch to this business of running a team.

And that, more than ever, is what kept Cone optimistic that he would keep the spot he has held for close to two decades.

"After 17 years, you'd always want to think the loyalty factor is going to kick in," he said.

It did. The Aces management renewed his contract—terms were not disclosed—despite the fact that the last time Cone won a title was in the 2003 Invitational tournament and the last time he won a conference crown was the 2000 All-Filipino Cup.

"I haven't had the kind of success the last couple of years when you look at the placings," Cone admitted. "But I felt comfortable with my performance as a coach and I felt that the team is moving in the right direction that, as a coach, you want it to."

That allowed him to keep his job in 1993, the fact that he was able to convince management that he had the pieces in place and that he had a system that would make those pieces move toward winning championships.

The players he had then were still ill at ease with the vaunted triangle offense—a system as complicated as the math that deals with the study of the geometric figure it is based on—and were close to rebelling against it. But Cone managed to sell the system and Alaska went on to win 10 titles in the '90s, including a grand slam in 1996.

This year, he feels he has the pieces in place and it's just a matter of getting a system down pat.

"It's no longer hard to sell the 'triangle,' what with the success it has proven with the Chicago Bulls, the LA Lakers and the Alaska Aces," said Cone. Count that: That's 20 titles among those three teams. "But it's tough selling the patience it takes to keep the faith in that system."

For that reason—and for the fact that teams have gotten a long hard look at the corners of that offense—Cone has varied his system to fit the players he has now.

"That's the important thing—we have the pieces ready," said Cone. "It may be quite impractical to make a goal out of trying to repeat what we did in the '90s—that was a special team with special players—but we have the players we want and we're applying a system that they're comfortable with."

"I think the team is where it should be at this point," he added.

And no doubt, Cone is where he should be, too.

Aces extend already long partnership with Cone

By June Navarro

ALASKA YESTERDAY ENDED SPECULations of a coaching revamp after giving Tim Cone a fresh mandate to continue a long-running partnership that transformed the Aces into one of the most respectable ballclubs in the Philippine Basketball Association.

Team manager Joaqui Trillo declined to disclose the terms but said that Cone, Alaska's head coach for 18 years, will stay with the Fred Uytengsu-owned franchise, extending what already is the longest coaching stint in the history of the league.

"I'm pleased to return for my 18th year with the team and I'm thankful that I'm still the one they feel who can get them to another championship," said Cone, whose Aces fell short of figuring in the ongoing Philippine Cup Finals after losing to Purefoods in the semifinals.

"It was a tough ending, but you can be sure that all of us, the players and the entire organization, will use that as motivation next conference."

The Aces were ahead, 3-1, in the best-of-seven semifinals before the Giants swept the series to arrange a championship duel with Red Bull.

"We just have to continue where we left off," said Cone.

Said Uytengsu: "We have enjoyed a fair amount of success over the years and I believe there is still more to come with this team."

Tipon captures gold; Tañamor, Payla fall short

BANTAMWEIGHT JOAN TIPON, A CINCH TO make the Doha Asian Games, punished Pakistan's Abid Ali in the finals and salvaged the Philippines' lone gold medal in the Greenhill Cup boxing competitions in Karachi, Pakistan, Sunday.

But highly regarded light-flyweight Harry Tañamor and flyweight Violito Payla bowed to vastly superior South Korean foes and settled for silver medals.

Using excellent footwork and stinging jabs, Tipon took the lead right in the first round en route to a 28-20 decision.

Earlier, Tañamor, who like Tipon is the reigning Southeast Asian Games titleholder, lost to the classy Hong Moo-won, 18-33, while Payla suffered a 17-37 beating from world champion Lee Ok-song.

The 1-2-1 gold-silver-bronze finish enabled the Philippines to finish third overall in the 22-team field featuring some of the finest Asian and European boxers.

Lightweight Genebert Basadre lost to a Pakistani rival in the semifinals and settled for the bronze.

Manny T. Lopez, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines, lauded the gallant stand of the Pacific Heights-sponsored fighters.

"Our boxers held their own against some of the world's best boxers," said Lopez, who thanked the Philippine Sports Commission for its support.

Thai decisions Rubillar in Bangkok

JUANITO RUBILLAR FAILED YESTERDAY IN his bid to win the World Boxing Council interim junior flyweight crown, losing via a unanimous decision to Thailand's Wandee Singwangcha in their 12-round battle at the Mall Shopping Center in Bangkapi, Bangkok, Thailand.

It was a fairly competitive fight, but not according to the three judges who scored the bout in favor of the Thai fighter, 117-113, 117-113 and 117-111. Singwangcha now gets the chance to challenge WBC junior flyweight kingpin Brian Viloria next, should the latter hurdle his Aug. 10 foe in Mexican Omar Niño Romero.

After a very close two rounds, Rubillar had a very slight edge in round three as he started pressing the action. He also was the aggressor in the fourth as Wandee kept on retreating. *Salven Lagumbay, contributor*

Marcelo stuns top guns in Rotax Invt'l karting

JEAN STEFANO MARCELO PULLED off a big surprise over favored rivals to rule the third leg of the Rotax Invitational Championship recently at the Carmona Circuit Philippines.

Charging back from the tailend, Marcelo posted the victory that established his stature as one of the country's elite young karters.

Hounded by mechanical problems, he finished sixth in the qualifying and had to start dead-last after being black-flagged due to a lost chain guard in Race One.

The rain washed away Marcelo's woes in the semifinal race where he worked his way up past topnotch drivers Indy Villalon, Maico Angeles, Oliver Aquino and Daniel Cleak to finish second behind winner Ivan Carapiet.

Marcelo passed pole-sitter Carapiet in the second corner of the first lap and gained a seven-second lead in Lap 4.

Though he drove conservatively in the 10th lap, Marcelo was already far from the reach of Cleak and Villalon, who did a wild chase after passing Alessandra Madrigal in Lap 6.

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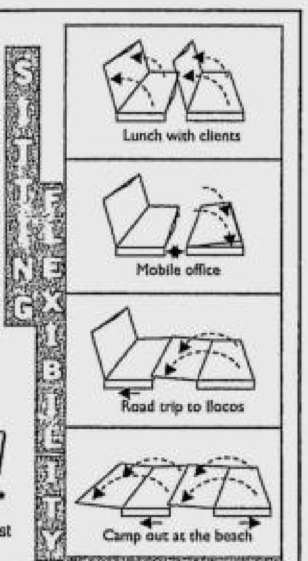

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OPENING TODAY

White Lady

Stars Angelica Panganiban, Pauleen Luna, JC de Vera, Jason Abalos

Directed by Jeff Tan

A gang of bullies preys on a studious newcomer (Luna), who soon discovers a horrifying secret. She is haunted by a female ghost in white—the same restless spirit who stalks and exacts revenge on the campus ruffians. The debuting director says he pulled out all the stops in making this movie, using "300 shots or 30 plus minutes of special effects." It was a complicated shoot, he says. Supervising producer Roselle Monteverde-Teo concurs: "He'd do eight to 10 takes. He was very meticulous." At first, Regal executive producer Lily Monteverde was bothered by the young filmmaker's perfectionism. "But when my mother saw the finished film, she was pleased," Teo says. The titular ghoul, Teo adds, is a product of F/X and prosthetics. "She's smoldering, smoke is coming out of her pores."

RV

Stars Robin Williams, Jeff Daniels, Cheryl Hines

Directed by Barry Sonnenfeld

An LA-based workaholic (Williams) takes his reluctant family on a holiday in Colorado, on board an RV, "an unwieldy, oversized vehicle." Along the way, they meet and are befriended by an "irritatingly endearing and carefree" clan who lives in an RV. The snobby city folks' close encounter with "full-time RVers" inadvertently teaches the former the true meaning of bonding. Eleanor Ringel-Gillespie of The Atlanta Journal-Constitution notes "a few bumps in the road, but overall it's an acceptable Big Dumb Summer Movie." Michael Wilimington of the Chicago Tribune complains: "Williams is such a comic virtuoso that it almost hurts to see him straining to pump life into a conventional, uninspired comedy … but he keeps the movie going

OPENING/ A2-6

'Kubrador' by special request

THE MOVIE'S lead star Gina Pareño with director Jeffrey Jeturian

By Marinel R. Cruz

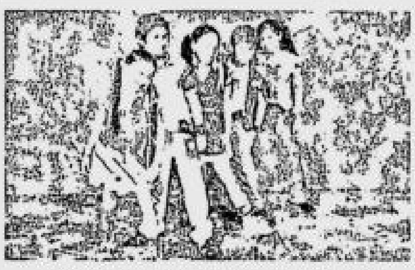
"KUBRADOR," THE opening movie in this year's Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival, had to be screened twice on Monday as a result of requests from various foreign embassies, INQUIRER Entertainment learned.

The requests for the Jeffrey Jeturian film came from representatives of the Italian, Japanese and American embassies, as well as from the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), according to festival coordinator Tess Ramses.

The American affairs and Association of Southeast Asian Nation (Asean) affairs divisions of the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA)—all expressed interest in "Kubrador," as well, said Ramses.

"We find this great interest in watching an [independent] film unusual," Ramses told INQUIRER Entertainment in a phone interview on Monday. "I guess it has to do with the fact that 'Kubrador' impressed many when it was shown outside the country—and also because of the controversial

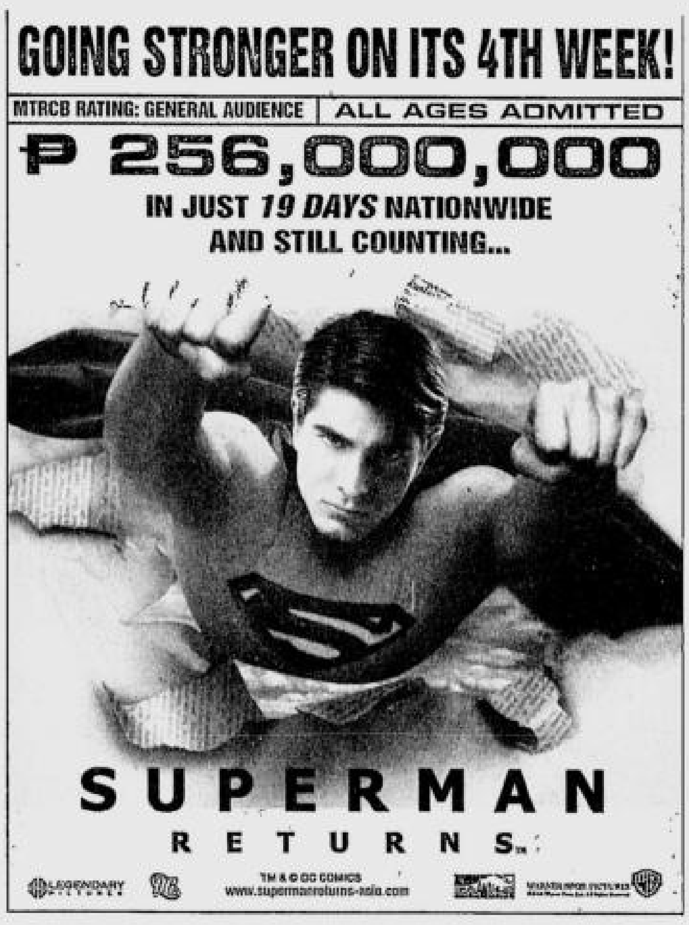
KUBRADOR/ A2-2



CENTERMATES CD ALBUM LAUNCHED

The Center for Pop Music Philippines (Management Division) recently launched the CD Album of the Centermates, one of the country's most promising kids' show group, in various malls in Metro Manila.

The Centermates' most recent performance, held in Riverbanks Mall in Marikina City, captured the musical hearts of an SRO crowd. Trained by the Center for Pop Music Philippines, Inc., the Centermates is composed of Miguel Raymundo, Jasmin Salvo, Carlyn Ocampo, Christelle Peig and Randell Panganihan. Most of the songs in the album is written by Hatch Albarracin.



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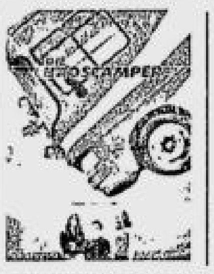

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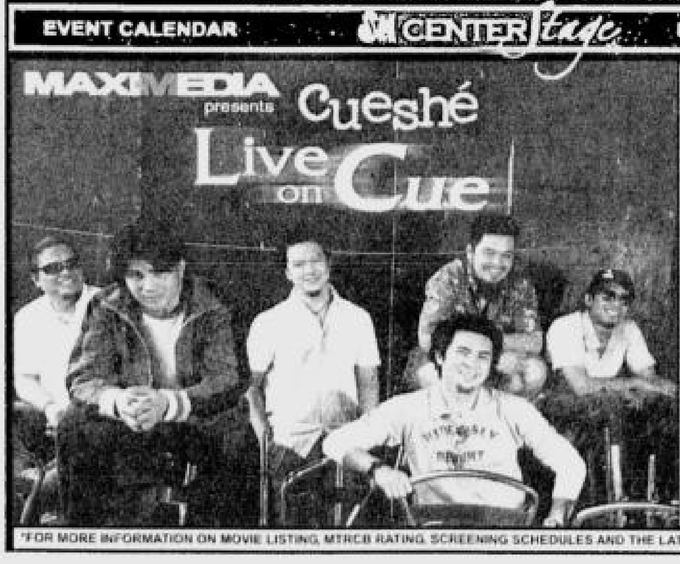

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FEEDBACK

Double standard

From Ariel Garces (arielgarces@yahoo.com):

I do not understand why the MTRCB reprimands only the big networks like ABS-CBN and GMA 7. There are other TV networks showing more lewd programs. An example is the show "Balitang Okray" on Ch. 21, Saturdays at 5 p.m. The hosts use very vulgar language unfit for TV. In one episode, the hosts narrated that Zanjoe Marudo was de-virginized by a gay at the age of 14 and was paid only a jumbo siopao, in exchange for his "jumbo hotdog." How can the MTRCB let this show get away with such vulgarity yet always pick on the shows of the other networks? Clearly, there is a double standard here.

'Kubrador'

From page A2-1

subject."

"Kubrador," produced by MLR Films, chronicles three days in the life of a *jueteng* collector played by Gina Pareño.

MLR Films executive producer Joji Alonso confirmed the second screening of the digital movie beforehand. "I lent reels of the film—with subtitles—to Cinemalaya so the members of the diplomatic corps could watch it," Alonso said. The movie was shown in two theaters at the Cultural Center of the Philippines simultaneously.

A Cinemalaya official who refused to be identified said the film has probably piqued the interest of some sectors because they are implicated in it. In the movie, the official said, a priest places a bet, and a government official protects a *jueteng* operator.

Critics' choice

"What's wrong with that?" Alonso said. "As a movie producer, I subscribe to only two things—honesty and passion. 'Kubrador' has both."

She added: "We believe in the material. No one has made a statement on *jueteng* yet [through a movie]. It's about time people started really talking about it."

"Kubrador," written by Ralston G. Jover, was unanimously chosen by the International Federation of Film Critics to receive the International Critic's Prize at the Moscow International Film Festival. It is also being invited to the annual Pusan International Film Festival in South Korea and the Hawaii International Film Festival in Honolulu.

Eight full-length feature and 10 short films are featured in weeklong Cinemalaya festival, which ends with an awards show on July 23.

(See festival "primer" in Viewfinder, A3-1.)

JACKIE Chan disrupts friend's concert.

ROUNDUP

$62.2M more for 'Pirates'

LOS ANGELES—"PIRATES OF THE Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest" dug up $62.2 million in its second weekend, raising its 10-day total to $258.2 million.

Last weekend's top 10 at US and Canadian theaters, according to Exhibitor Relations, official trackers: 1) "Pirates," $62.2M; 2) "Little Man," $21.7M; 3) "You, Me and Dupree," $21.3M; 4) "Superman Returns," $11.6M; 5) "The Devil Wears Prada," $10.45M; 6) "Cars," $7.5M; 7) "Click," $7M; 8) "The Lake House," $1.6M; 9) "Nacho Libre," $1.5M; 10) "A Scanner Darkly," $1.2M. *AP*

Jackie Chan: So sorry!

HONG KONG— Jackie Chan apologized Sunday for his drunken disruption at Taiwanese singer-songwriter Jonathan Lee's concert last week. The actor unexpectedly climbed on stage and verbally sparred with annoyed audience members.

Chan was a scheduled concert guest last Sunday but showed up unannounced on stage the following evening.

A surprised Lee asked, "How come you came up?"

Viewers heckled Chan yelling "pull him off stage," "go away," and "you're so annoying." Chan responded with a Cantonese insult.

Meeting with reporters after a promotional event for his upcoming action comedy "Rob-B-Hood," Chan apologized.

"I shouldn't play with my friendship with Jonathan Lee in public," Chan said. "I apologize to [him] and to the audience that night." *AP*

MTRCB RATING ▸ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
The Funny Girl from She's the MAN is back in another Hilarious Romantic Comedy
AMANDA BYNES
To get the guy of her dreams, One girl is really going overboard.
LOVE WRECKED
2ND WEEK
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Tripid 'to!
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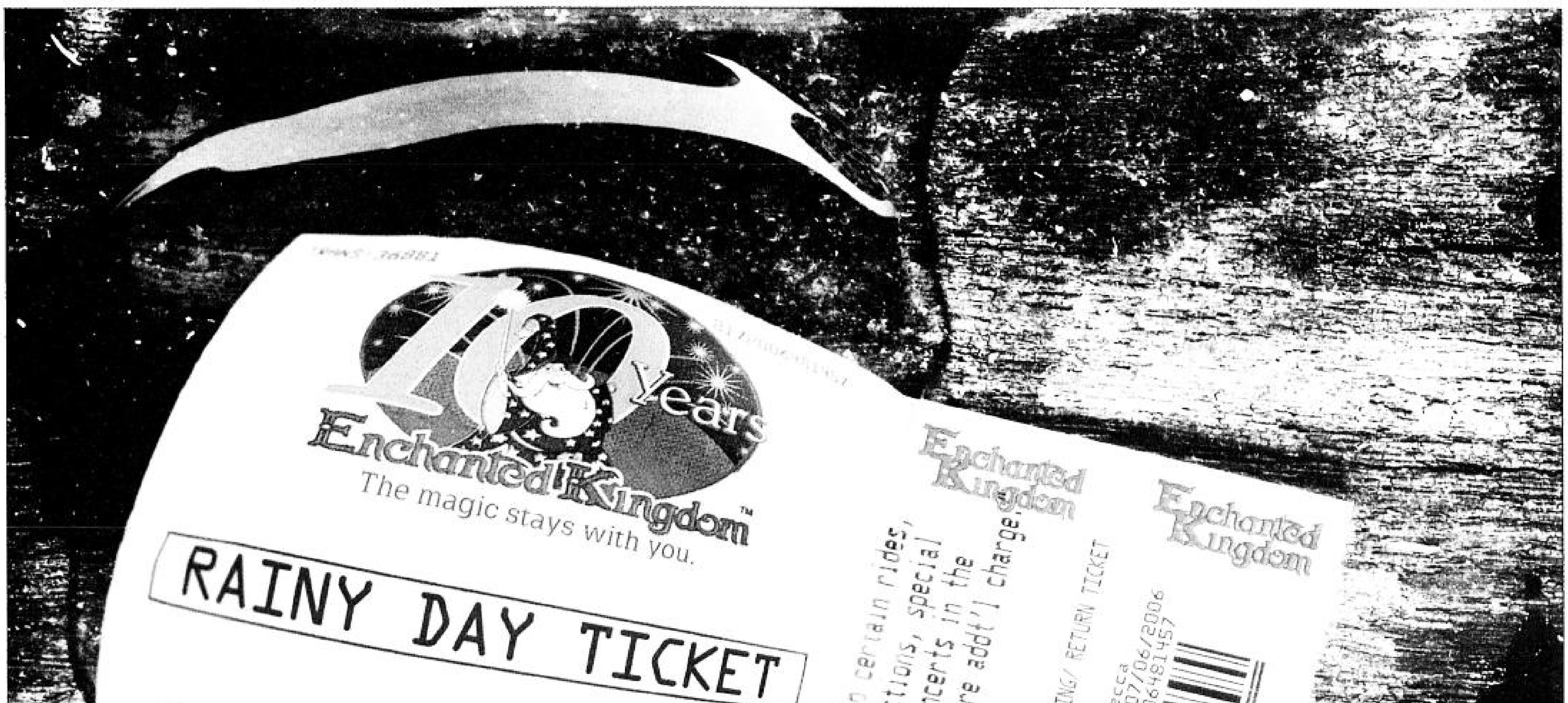
10 Years
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RAINY DAY TICKET
Enchanted Kingdom
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NOT VALID FOR REBOOKING/ RETURN TICKET
Rebecca
07/06/2006
Blow up the fun and excitement with a free return pass every time it rains with Enchanted Kingdom's Rainy Days Promo!

The free return pass will be given after 5 minutes of continuous rain and is valid for 2 weeks from date of visit. Promo runs until August 13, 2006 only so hurry and get ready for some wet n' wild fun!
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IAAPA A proud member since 1996 Park Address: San Lorenzo South, City of Santa Rosa, Laguna • Makati Sales Office: Ground Floor, The Biltmore Condominium, 102 Aguirre St., Legaspi Vill., Makati City. Tel. Nos. 830-21-11 to 16 and 843-60-73 to 78. www.enchantedkingdom.com.ph

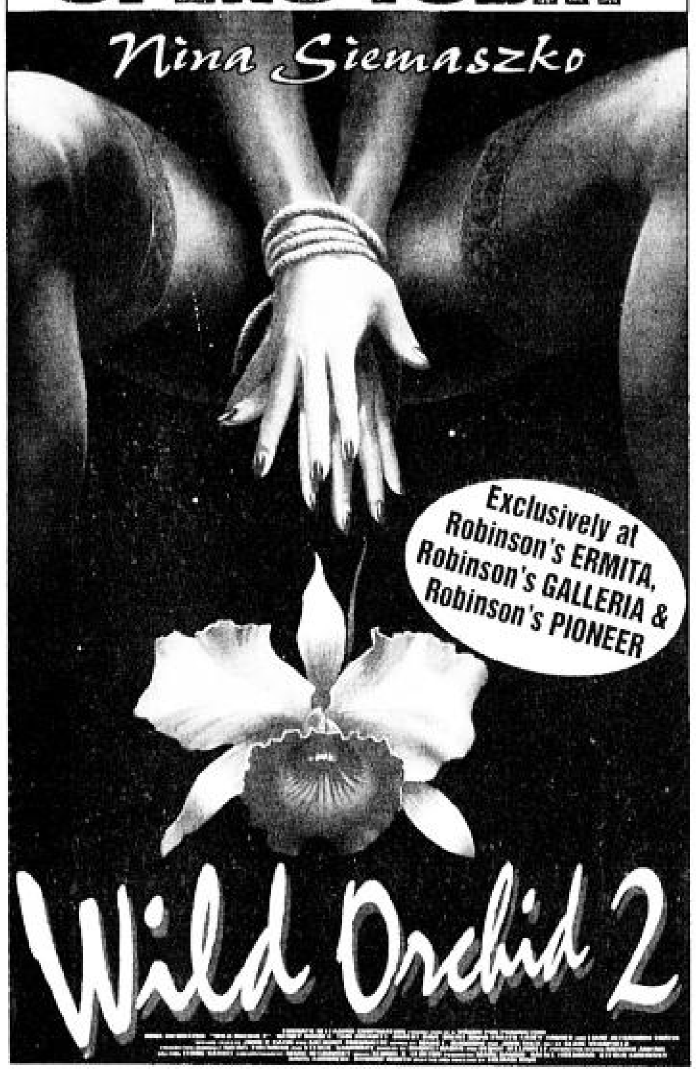
POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41 DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

LADY IN THE WATER PG13	NACHO LIBRE PG13	RUNAWAY VACATION G
PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2 G	SUPERMAN RETURNS G	PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2 G

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898-144041

OPENS TODAY


Nina Siemaszko
Exclusively at Robinson's ERMITA, Robinson's GALLERIA & Robinson's PIONEER
Wild Orchid 2

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CINEMA 1	NACHO LIBRE	PG13
CINEMA 2	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2	GP

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NOW SHOWING

CINEMA 3	RUNAWAY VACATION	GP
CINEMA 4	LADY IN THE WATER	PG13
CINEMA 5	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2	GP

TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, CALL: 722 4496.

MUSIC MUSEUM

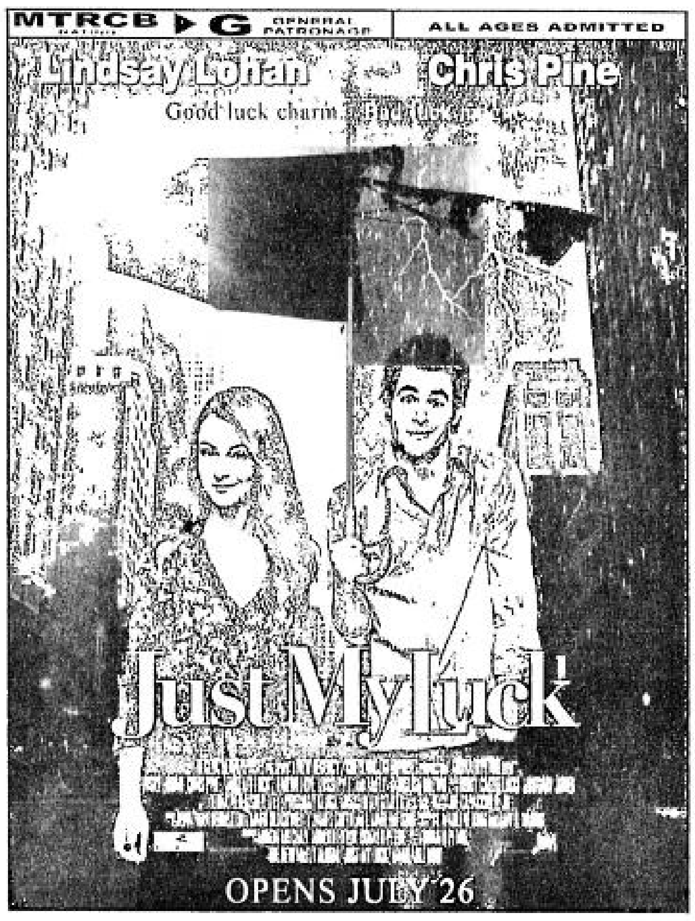
JULY 22,2006	RAZORBACK BAND	9:00PM
JULY 29,2006	PILITA C. & ELIZABETH R.	8:30PM

T·E·A·T·R·I·N·O PROMENADE GREENHILLS

EVERY MONDAY	DANCE NIGHT	7:00PM
EVERY WEDNESDAY	CERRUDO - CLASSICO	8:00PM
JULY 21, 2006	JUICE	9:00PM
	FOR INQUIRIES PLS CALL 722 4532 LOC 116	

FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635

MTRCB RATING ▶ G GENERAL PATRONAGE | ALL AGES ADMITTED



SHANG CINEPLEX

1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
MTRCB GP
12 30, 3.40, 6.50, 10.00

2 LADY IN THE WATER
MTRCB PG-13
2 00 4 40, 7 20 10 00

3 R.V. RUNAWAY VACATION
MTRCB GP
12.40, 3.00, 5 20, 7 40, 10 00

4 NACHO LIBRE
MTRCB PG-13
1 20, 3 30 5 40 7 50, 10.00

PREMIERE THEATRE: PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
2 10, 5 20, 8 30 MTRCB GP

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

Catch the Cineplex Special

Come to SHANG'S SEASON-ENDER SALE from JULY 14-31! Enjoy up to 75% OFF on selected items! Get a chance to win exciting prizes in the "SHOP, PICK AND WIN" promo during the sale period.

For inquiries, please call 633-7861 to 70
See posters and flyers for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A3-0536 series of 2006

Call 633-7861, loc. 171 or 633-2227 for more details.

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July 19 & 26
8 PM / Fuente Circle

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City

For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

1	NACHO LIBRE	2:15, 4:25, 6:35, 8:45, 10:50	PG-13
2	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN	12:30, 3:50, 7:10, 10:30	GP
3	LADY IN THE WATER	12:30, 3:10, 5:50, 8:30, 11:00	GP
4	RUNAWAY VACATION	1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40, 11:00	GP

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU MARKET! MARKET! Ayala Malls

AT THE CINEMAS

Reserve your tickets by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart) or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservations.
Movie schedules may change without prior notice. For verification, please call 729 7777

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G1 GLORIETTA 1	WHITE LADY	PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	LADY IN THE WATER	SUPERMAN RETURNS			
G4 GLORIETTA 4	LADY IN THE WATER	NACHO LIBRE	THX PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST GUARANTEED SEATS	LOVEWRECKED	RV: RUNAWAY VACATION	PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	SUPERMAN RETURNS
GB1 GREENBELT 1	LADY IN THE WATER	PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	THX LADY IN THE WATER GUARANTEED SEATS	THX PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN DEAD MAN'S CHEST GUARANTEED SEATS	RV: RUNAWAY VACATION GUARANTEED SEATS	SUPERMAN RETURNS GUARANTEED SEATS	PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN DEAD MAN'S CHEST GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	THX PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	RV: RUNAWAY VACATION	LADY IN THE WATER	SUPERMAN RETURNS	PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN DEAD MAN'S CHEST	LADY IN THE WATER	RV: RUNAWAY VACATION	NACHO LIBRE			
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN: DEAD MAN'S CHEST	WHITE LADY	RV: RUNAWAY VACATION	LADY IN THE WATER	SUPERMAN RETURNS		

At the Activity Center

Customer Service text hotline: 0917 6095900
Customer Service Numbers: Glorietta - 752 7272: from 10am to 8pm
Greenbelt - 752 4853: from 11am to 12mn
Alabang Town Center - 842 2782: from 10am to 8pm
Ayala Center Cebu - (032) 231 5342 loc 324
Market! Market! - 886 7519

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER
PDI Job Expo July 17 to 19, 2006	Blim's Fine Furniture Exhibit July 3 to 21, 2006
AYALA CENTER CEBU	MARKET! MARKET!
Kikay Category Sale Event July 21, 2006	Mabuhay Tinapay! July 21, 2006

GREENBELT — Jazz Nights at GB 2
July 19 & 26, 2006

Greenbelt Onstage — Repertory Philippines presents
Walt Disney's ALADDIN JR.
at REP's Globe Theater - Aug. 12, 20, 26, Sept. 3, 9, Oct. 14 & 22
For inquiries, pls. call 887-0710

Ayala MUSEUM — Ode To The Pasig River
June 27 to August 27, 2006
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THE PRODUCERS

The movie classic that became a Broadway sensation now becomes a movie musical event!

GOLDEN GLOBE NOMINATIONS:
Best Picture Musical / Comedy
Best Actor Musical / Comedy (Nathan Lane)
Best Supporting Actor (Will Ferrell)
Best Song (There's Nothing Like A Show On Broadway)
MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

Ayala Malls CINEMAS
COLUMBIA PICTURES

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GLORIETTA
Activity Center
July 21 - 4pm
Customer Service Hotline: 752-7272

GREENBELT
Greenbelt 3 Park
July 20 - 7pm
Customer Service Hotline: 757-4853

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Activity Center
July 22 - 10am
Customer Service Hotline: 842-2782, 772-1860

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FAB TALKS
Know the latest trends in fashion, food, culture, home and grooming.

Please see leaflets for details.

glorietta GREENBELT ALABANG TOWN CENTER
www.ayalamalls.com.ph

'Compound' premieres in indie fest

"COMPOUND," A FILM BY WILL FREDO, had its Philippine premiere yesterday as an exhibition film in the ongoing Cinemalaya Film Festival (until July 23) at the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Fredo also wrote this gripping psychosexual thriller that tackles the themes of escape and guilt via a story on the abuse of crystal methamphetamine, or shabu, in the compound of the Delos Reyes family.

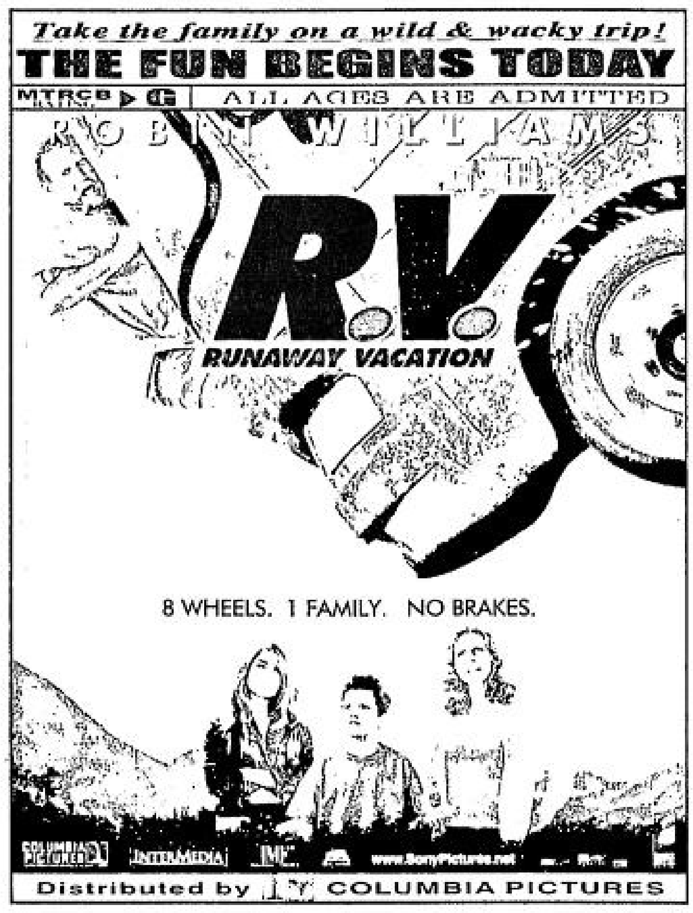
JOHN ARCILLA

The movie will have a second screening on July 23 at 12:45 p.m.

A 2006 Cleveland International Film Festival Official Selection, "Compound" has been cited as "a contemporary thriller that deals with the complexities of love, wealth and fear. A perfectly unexpected and well-executed ending makes this a not-to-be-missed film."

John Arcilla leads a powerful cast that showcases first-rate Filipino talents. "Compound" also stars Janet Russ, Jake Macapagal and Liza Diño. Musical score is by Bob Aves, with vocal performances by Grace Nono. Cinematography is by Gene Gallardo and Peter John Sta. Maria. Produced by George Sommerrock, Greg Macaraeg, Medwin Garcia and Joan Manalang.

For tickets, call 832-3704, or 891-9999. Visit http://www.compoundthemovie.com.


Take the family on a wild & wacky trip!
THE FUN BEGINS TODAY
MTRCB ▶ G
ALL AGES ARE ADMITTED
ROBIN WILLIAMS
R.V.
RUNAWAY VACATION
8 WHEELS. 1 FAMILY. NO BRAKES.
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vince vaughn
jennifer aniston
the break-up
pick a side.
www.thebreakupmovie.net
IN THEATERS JULY 26
united international pictures
UNIVERSAL

EXCLUSIVE SCREENING
Robinsons Movieworld
GALLERIA and ERMITA
Showing on JULY 19

The latest film maker Zalman King, "Wild Orchid 2" is as erotic as it gets, apart from which, it is truly a satisfactory "couples erotica."

It has a sentimental storyline about a young girl named Blue (Nina Siemaszko) who is forced into prostitution by economic circumstances. She tries to live a double life in and out of the brothel and, in a vaguely Elizabethan twist, ends up providing paid pleasure to her dream man while she is in disguise.

The knowledge Blue gains while in dusguise allows her to evaluate her lover's sincerity later on. With the aid of a sympathetic brothel bodyguard Sully, Blue escapes the hold exerted on her by the madam, leaves town, and tries to establish herself as a high school student - in the same high school where her dream boy is the school quarterback! They end up courting one another chastely, although he remains unaware that he has already had sex with her. Meanwhile, the jilted madam wants Blue back, and will stop at nothing to get her.

MTRCB Rating: R-18

For SCREENING SCHEDULE, pls. call our CINEMA ACCESS: 635-5555 or visit us: www.robinsonsmovieworld.com

Nina Siemaszko
Wild Orchid 2

MTRCB RATING ▶ G
ALL AGES ADMITTED
Caution: Film contains some scary scenes.
CAPTAIN JACK IS BACK!
Pirates of the Caribbean
NOW SHOWING
pirates.movies.com

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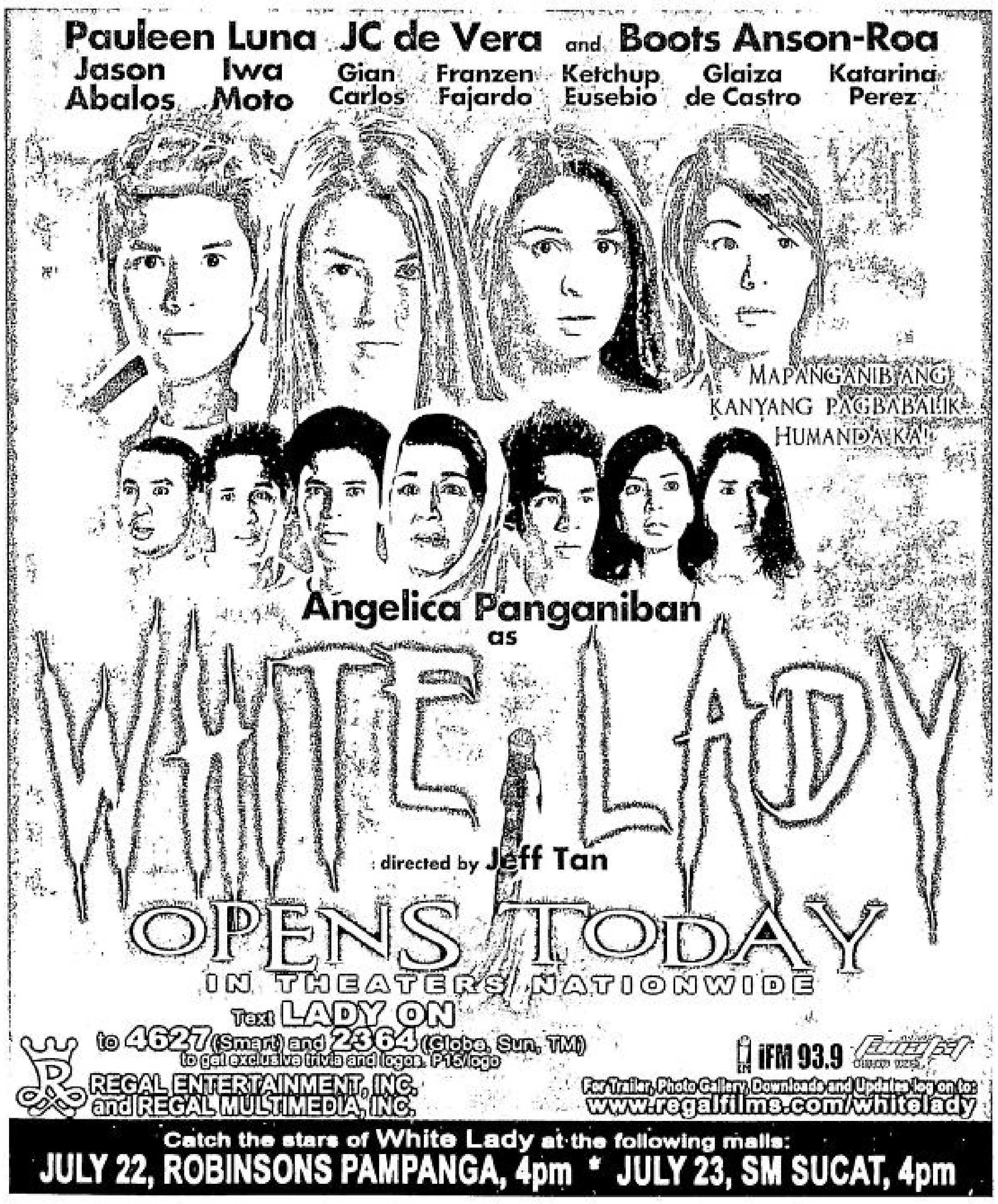
GateWay CINEPLEX*10
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX

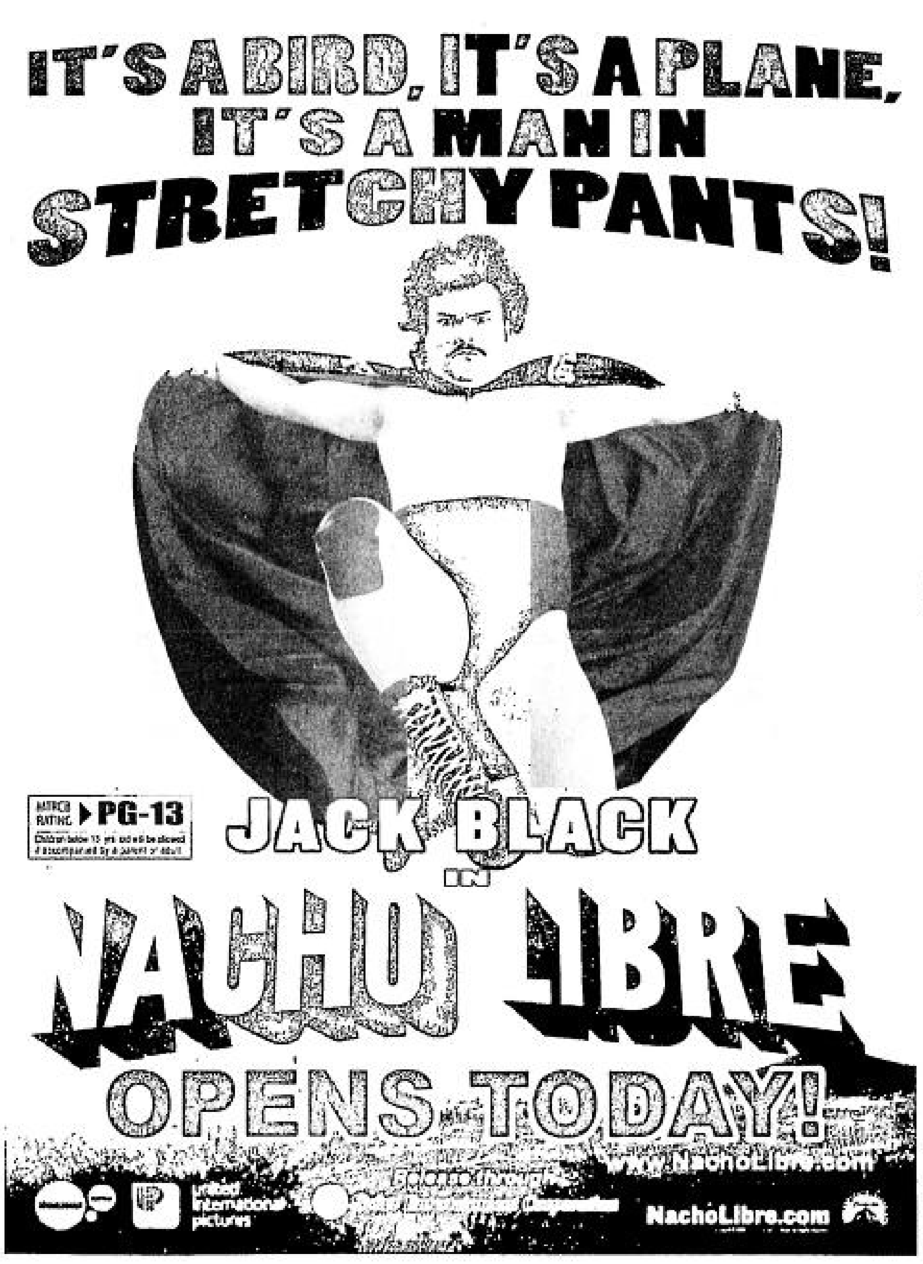
WHITE LADY
SUPERMAN RETURNS 12.30 / 3:30 / 6:30 / 9:30
NACHO LIBRE 1:05 / 3.15 / 5.25 / 7.35 / 9:45
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 1:00 / 4:00 / 7:00 / 10:00
LADY IN THE WATER 12:20 / 2:10 / 2:45 / 4:35 5:10 / 7:00 / 7:35 / 9:25 / 10:00
RUNAWAY VACATION 1:10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7.40 / 9:50
PLATINUM CINEMA
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2 2:00 / 3:00 / 6:00 / 9:00

AliMALL 5
WHITE LADY
PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 2
LADY IN THE WATER 1:15 / 3:40 / 6:05 / 8.30
RUNAWAY VACATION 12:05 / 2.15 / 4.20 / 6.35 / 8:45
NACHO LIBRE 12:00 / 2:10 / 4:20 / 6:30 / 8:40
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

For ticket inquiries, please call TicketNet at 911-5555 or log on to www.ticketnet.com.ph

ARANETA COLISEUM
July 19, Wed. PBA PHILIPPINE CUP FINALS
7:10 pm PUREFOODS vs RED BULL
NBA MADNESS 2006 - CELEBRITY JAM
July 22, Saturday - 7:30 pm


Pauleen Luna JC de Vera and Boots Anson-Roa
Jason Abalos
Iwa Moto
Gian Carlos
Franzen Fajardo
Ketchup Eusebio
Glaiza de Castro
Katarina Perez
MAPANGANIB ANG KANYANG PAGBABALIK. HUMANDA KA!
Angelica Panganiban as
WHITE LADY
directed by Jeff Tan
OPENS TODAY
IN THEATERS NATIONWIDE
Text LADY ON
to 4627 (Smart) and 2364 (Globe, Sun, TM)
to get exclusive trivia and logos. P15/logo
REGAL ENTERTAINMENT, INC. and REGAL MULTIMEDIA, INC.
iFM 93.9
For Trailer, Photo Gallery, Downloads and Updates log on to:
www.regalfilms.com/whitelady
Catch the stars of White Lady at the following malls:
JULY 22, ROBINSONS PAMPANGA, 4pm * JULY 23, SM SUCAT, 4pm


IT'S A BIRD, IT'S A PLANE,
IT'S A MAN IN
STRETCHY PANTS!
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13
JACK BLACK
IN
NACHO LIBRE
OPENS TODAY!
www.NachoLibre.com
united international pictures
NachoLibre.com

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 R.V RUNAWAY VACATION
4 NACHO LIBRE
PREMIERE
PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4234/816.4236
1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 WHITE LADY
4 R. V.

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 R. V.
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
5 WHITE LADY

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504286, 5433994
1 WHITE LADY
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
4 R. V.

THEATRES
1 SUPERMAN RETURNS
2 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS -3
3 WHITE LADY

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
1 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN-2
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 NACHO LIBRE
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 LADY IN THE WATER
5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
6 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
7 SUPERMAN RETURNS
8 I WANNA BE HAPPY
9 R. V.
10 WHITE LADY

Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sta. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 WHITE LADY
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
4 RESERVED

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 7334228
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
3 WHITE LADY
4 NACHO LIBRE
5 R. V.

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
2 WHITE LADY
3 I WANNA BE HAPPY
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 WHITE LADY
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4440346)
1 LADY IN THE WATER
2 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 I WHITE LADY
2 LADY IN THE WATER
3 R. V.
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 SUPERMAN RETURNS
2 WHITE LADY

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 NACHO LIBRE
2 PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 2
3 LADY IN THE WATER
4 RUNAWAY VACATION

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 WHITE LADY
2 R. V.
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 WHITE LADY
2 R. V.
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2
4 SUPERMAN RETURNS

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 WHITE LADY
2 I WANNA BE HAPPY
3 SUPERMAN RETURNS

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 WHITE LADY
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 I WANNA BE HAPPY
4 CHAOS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 WHITE LADY
2 R. V.
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN - 2

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 WHITE LADY
2 I WANNA BE HAPPY

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS-3
2 BATAS MILITAR

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS-3
2 BATAS MILITAR
3 ROSARIO 18
4

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 WHITE LADY
2 R. V.
3 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2
4 BATAS MILITAR
5 BOLD STAR

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 R. V.
2 SUPERMAN RETURNS
3 WHITE LADY
4 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN-2

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 BATAS MILITAR
2 THE FAST & THE FURIOUS-3

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

OPENING TODAY

From page A2-1

through sheer comic willpower."

Lady in the Water

Stars Paul Giamatti, Bryce Dallas Howard, Bob Balaban

Directed by M. Night Shyamalan

A "bedtime story" recounts "bizarre happenings" in a Cleveland apartment building where the superintendent (Giamatti) discovers an "enigmatic woman living under the complex's swimming pool." With the help of his quirky neighbors, he joins the mysterious "narf" (Howard) in a quest to fulfill her mission. JoBlo's Movie Emporium comments: "[This is] a movie as much about reconnecting with our childhood as it is about fantastical creatures." Edward Douglas of Coming-Soon.net calls it "strange … gorgeous … Not only Shyamalan's scariest and funniest movie to date, but also his most accomplished, ably [telling] an original and unconventional fairy tale." Emanuel Levy of emanuellevy.com disagrees: "This misbegotten project is his weakest, most problematic and least engaging picture."

Nacho Libre

Stars Jack Black, Ana de la Reguera, Hector Jimenez

Directed by Jared Hess

A monastery cook (Black) dreams of becoming a Lucha Libre wrestler—a "larger-than-life king of the ring idolized throughout Mexico." Problem is, the friars frown upon such worldly endeavors. On the sly, he dons a mask, adopts the alias Nacho and competes with the country's toughest wrestlers. Joe Leydon of Variety points out that the movie "strikes a delicate balance of whimsy and absurdity that may surprise [viewers] primed to expect wall-to-wall slapstick … Black's ability to temper wild-eyed excess with heartfelt sincerity keeps his character endearing throughout." Charina Chocano of the Los Angeles Times notices a kinship between Black and legendary Mexican comedian Cantinflas. Nacho "recalls a certain kind of underdog … the little man who is beloved precisely because he is ridiculous, pathetic and innocent … Black is a gifted physical comedian with expressive eyes and a tender streak."

"RV"

Wild Orchid 2

Stars Nina Siemaszko, Tom Skerritt, Brent Fraser

Directed by Zalman King

This 1992 movie from the same producer-director behind glossy erotic flicks "9 1/2 Weeks" and "Wild Orchid" is not a sequel to the controversial original starring Mickey Rourke and Carre Otis. Instead, this atmospheric drama set in 1958 chronicles the sexual adventures of a destitute teenager (Siemaszko) who turns to prostitution after the death of his father—an itinerant jazz musician (Skerritt). Jack Sommersby of Efilmcritic.com comments that it's an "unexpectedly affecting, involving little drama that's teeming with genuine feeling." Stephen Holden of the New York Times thinks its "erotic ambience has little to do with explicit sex and everything to do with fantasy … [It] clearly wants to do more than merely titillate, but it has only the faintest idea of what it wants to say and of how to say it." Shown exclusively in Robinsons Galleria and Ermita.

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Catch the host of GMA 7's "Ang Pagbabago" during the Closing Ceremonies today at 5 p.m.

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PREFERRED COMPANIES

"ROTONDA"

"ANG HULING Araw ng Linggo"

"TULAD ng Dati"

2006 Cinemalaya primer

SINCE WE JUDGED THIS YEAR'S CINEMALAYA full-length digital feature competition's story and screenplay phases, here's a hopefully knowledgeable primer of the eight full-length movies for cinema buffs who want to make more productive use of their viewing time at the alternative film fest.

Which movies should you make a beeline for at the CCP until July 23? It depends on what you're looking for:

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

If you're keen on indigenous Filipino culture and the clash between tradition and modernization, **"Batad, Sa Paang Palay"** could be for you. The film revolves around a 14-year-old boy who longs to own a pair of nifty sports shoes, so he can leave his Ifugao roots behind and chase his big-city dreams. By **Benjie Garcia** and **Vic Acedillo Jr.**

If you love bands and wonder why mainstream producers haven't come up with a musical drama about them, **Michael Sandejas' "Tulad ng Dati"** could strum your strings. The film is a bio-drama that pays tribute to The Dawn in an unusual and beguiling way.

If you want to laugh and be inspired at the same time, **"Saan Nagtatago Si Happiness?"** could be your cuppa. Tikyo, a cock-eyed optimist, cheers up all sorts of people, even as he has to contend with many reversals in his. By **Florida Bautista** and **Real Florido.**

If you're intrigued by the noble whale sharks that mysteriously visit Donsol, Sorsogon, and are open to a story of heartbreak, cancer, and the healing power of love, **"Donsol"** by **Adolf Alix Jr.** could whet your appetite for symbols and meanings viewed a distance away from the harsh glare of reality.

If you want to see a film about the unusual topic of female boxers, **"In Da Red Korner"** could score a knockout with you. The sports drama by **Dado Lomibao** and **Bong Ramos** follows five female boxers all the way to the finals of the National Open Boxing Championships.

If you're open to a movie about an unconventional mother who ends up resorting to behaving even more unusually after she reads her daughter's journal, **"Mudraks"** could warm your heart and open your mind to new possibilities for parent-child relationships. By **Arah Jell Badayos** and **Margaret Guzman.**

And, if you are fascinated by the interweaving lives of seeming strangers, two Cinemalaya entries could beguile you with their complex intimations:

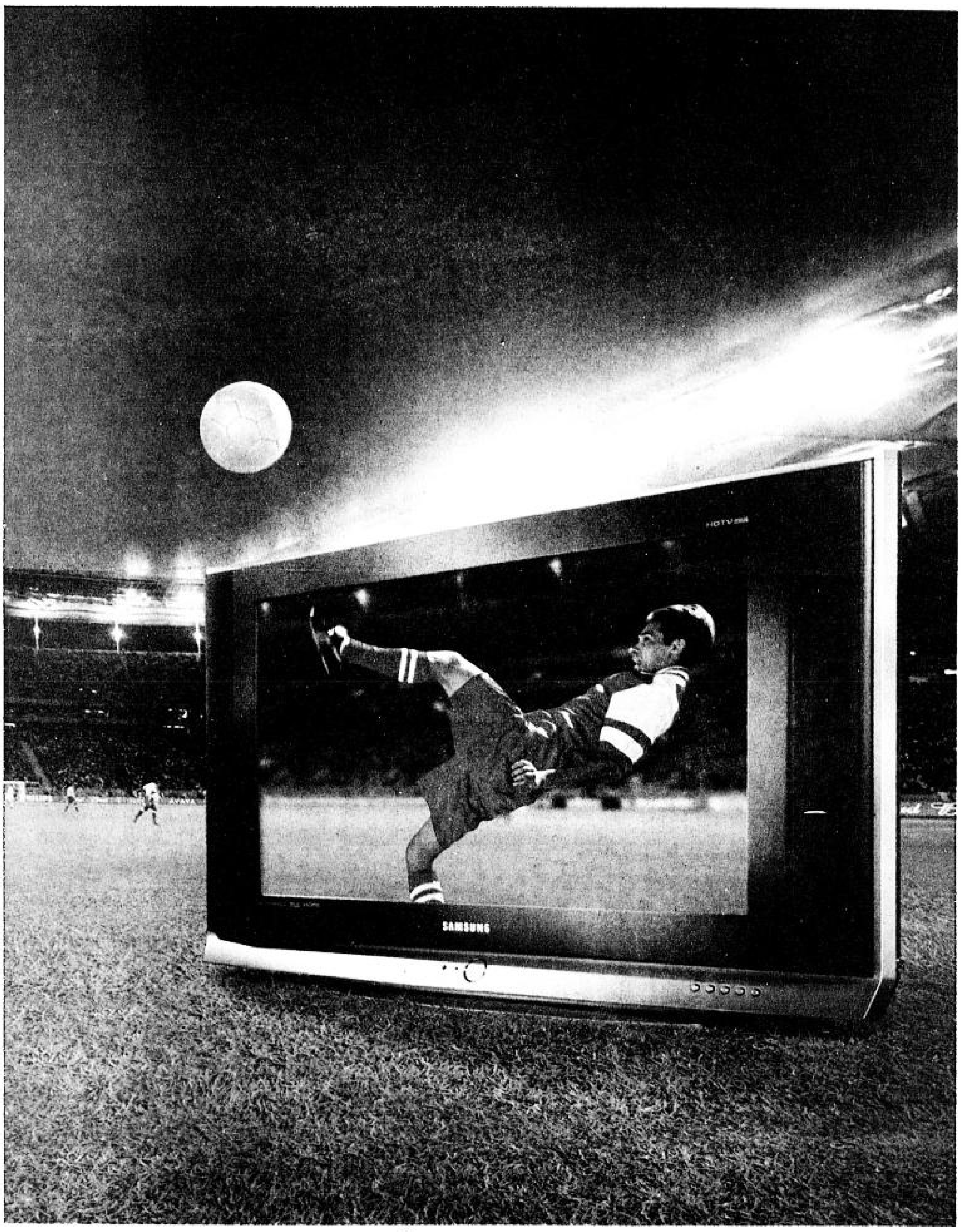
Ron Bryant's "Rotonda" revolves around an urban intersection and follows the path of a marked P1,000 bill as it transfers from one edgy character to another before returning to its original owner, disturbingly blood-tainted.

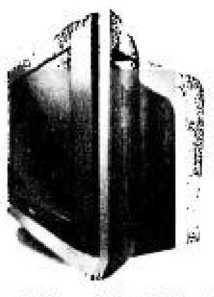
And **Nick Joseph Olanka's "Ang Huling Araw ng Linggo"** gives one each of its interconnected characters a day to depict his or her life, disposition and resolution to his or her problems, showing life as a cycle of "random" events in which decisions made are as important as choices not taken.

See you at the (Cinemalaya) movies! (Call 832-1125 local 1704-05, or visit www.culturalcenter.gov.ph.)

Mr. & Ms. Magazine

The July issue of Mr. & Ms. Magazine has **Kris Aquino** and **Boy Abunda** on the cover, and they talk about their fitness regimen. Other articles are on alternative medicine, buff and beautiful bodies, the latest on Eugene Tejada, tai-chi for the mind and body, water for relaxation, walking for fitness, the magic of thyme, negative thoughts and illness, tarot cards, and **Aga Muhlach** as actor and father. A good, varied read for everyone





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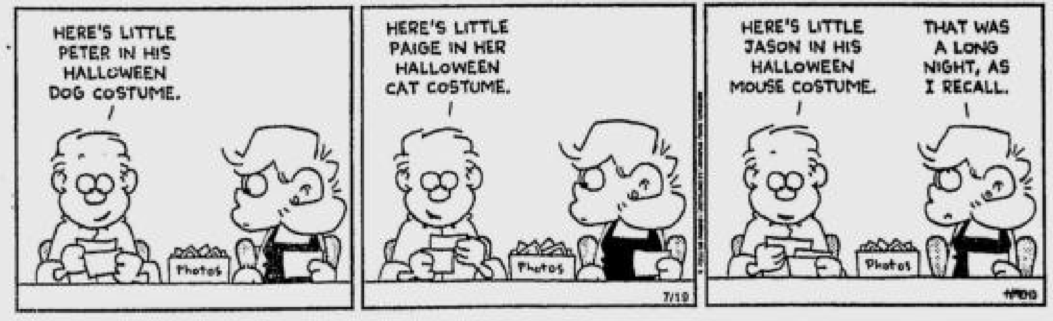
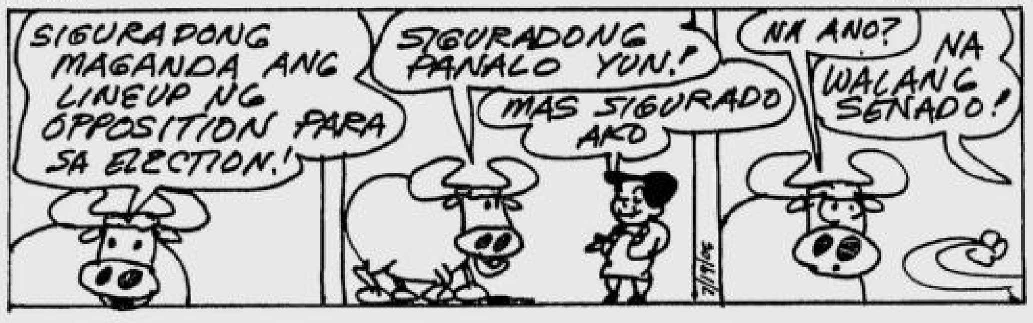
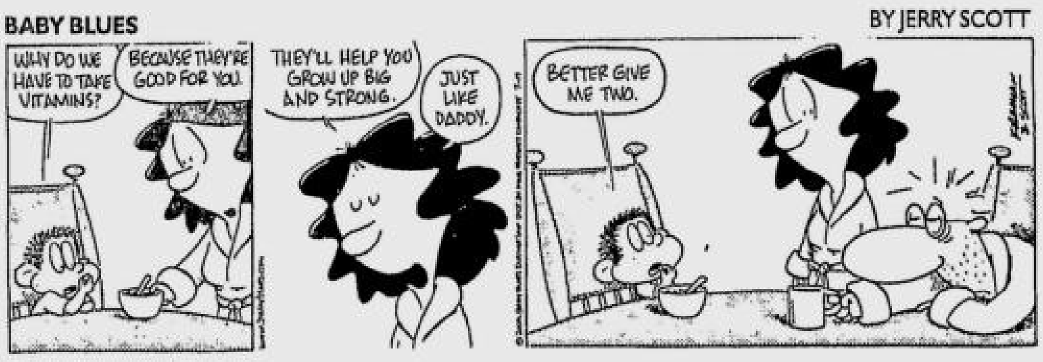
FOXTROT
BY BILL AMEND


HERE'S LITTLE PETER IN HIS HALLOWEEN DOG COSTUME.
Photos
HERE'S LITTLE PAIGE IN HER HALLOWEEN CAT COSTUME.
7/19
HERE'S LITTLE JASON IN HIS HALLOWEEN MOUSE COSTUME.
THAT WAS A LONG NIGHT, AS I RECALL.

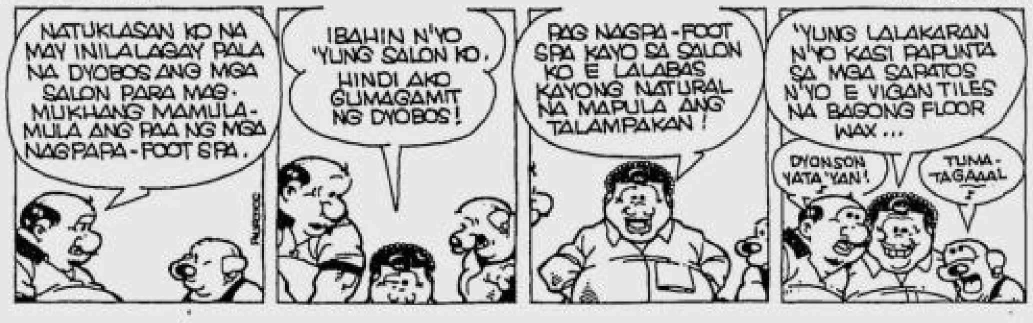
A. LIPIN
BY JESS ABRERA


SIGURADONG MAGANDA ANG LINEUP NG OPPOSITION PARA SA ELECTION!
SIGURADONG PANALO YUN!
MAS SIGURADO AKO
NA ANO?
NA WALANG SENADO!

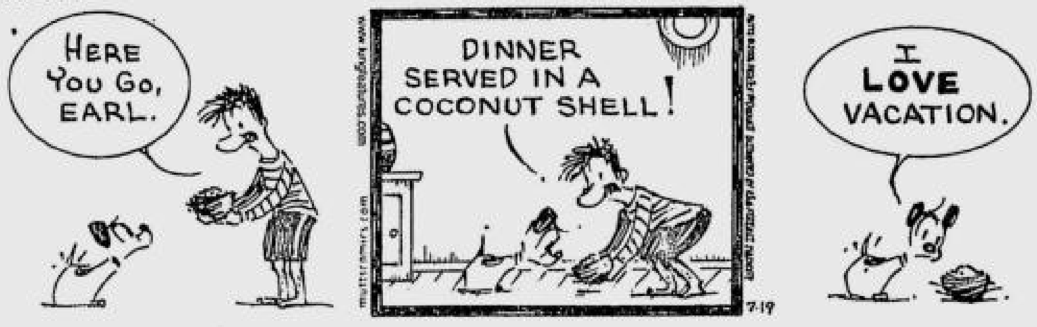
BABY BLUES
BY JERRY SCOTT


WHY DO WE HAVE TO TAKE VITAMINS?
BECAUSE THEY'RE GOOD FOR YOU.
THEY'LL HELP YOU GROW UP BIG AND STRONG.
JUST LIKE DADDY.
BETTER GIVE ME TWO.

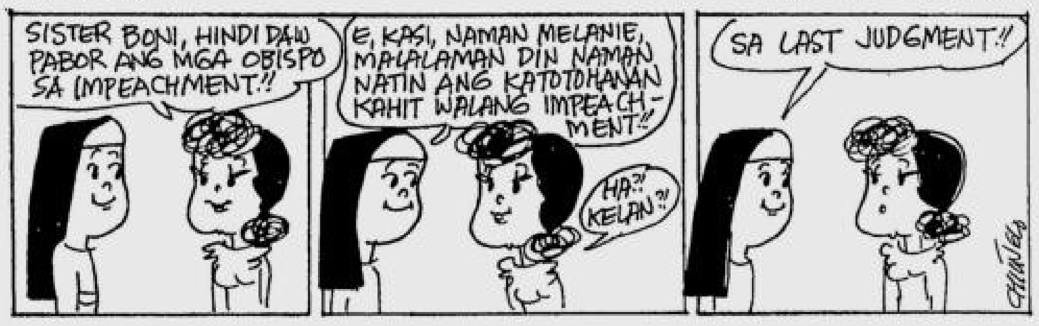
PUGAD BABOY
BY P.M. JUNIOR


NATUKLASAN KO NA MAY INILALAGAY PALA NA DYOBOS ANG MGA SALON PARA MAG-MUKHANG MAMULA-MULA ANG PAA NG MGA NAGPAPA-FOOT SPA.
IBAHIN N'YO 'YUNG SALON KO. HINDI AKO GUMAGAMIT NG DYOBOS!
PAG NAGPA-FOOT SPA KAYO SA SALON KO E LALABAS KAYONG NATURAL NA MAPULA ANG TALAMPAKAN!
'YUNG LALAKARAN N'YO KASI PAPUNTA SA MGA SAPATOS N'YO E VIGAN TILES NA BAGONG FLOOR WAX...
DYONSON YATA 'YAN!
TUMA-TAGAAAL

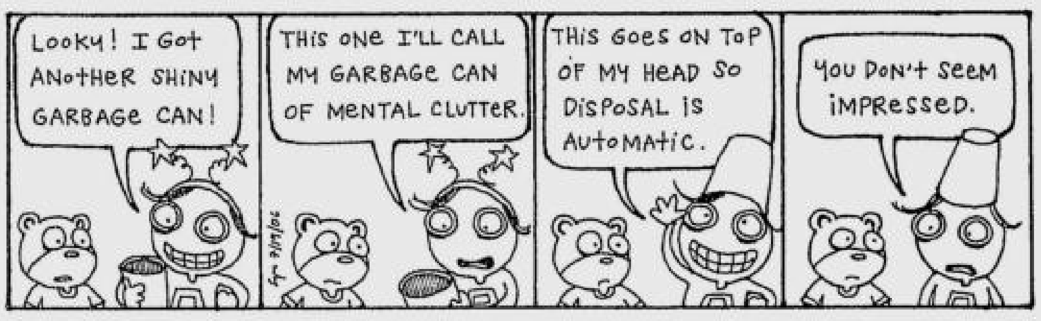
MUTTS
BY PATRICK McDONNELL


HERE YOU GO, EARL.
DINNER SERVED IN A COCONUT SHELL!
7-19
I LOVE VACATION.

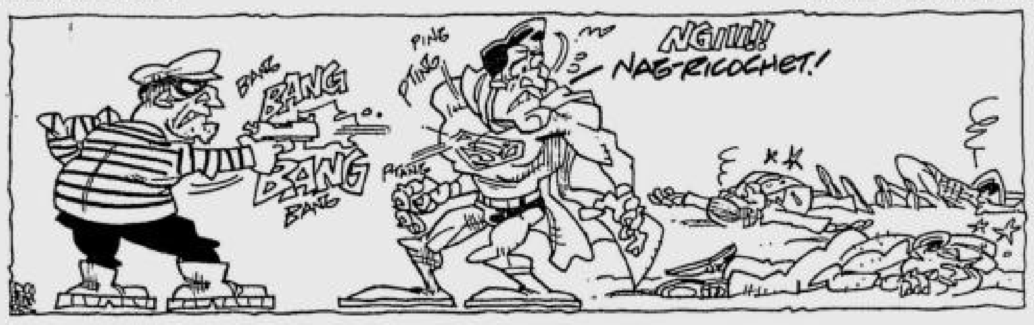
LOVEKNOTS
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SISTER BONI, HINDI DAW PABOR ANG MGA OBISPO SA IMPEACHMENT!!
E, KASI, NAMAN MELANIE, MALALAMAN DIN NAMAN NATIN ANG KATOTOHANAN KAHIT WALANG IMPEACH-MENT!!
HA?! KELAN?!
SA LAST JUDGMENT!!

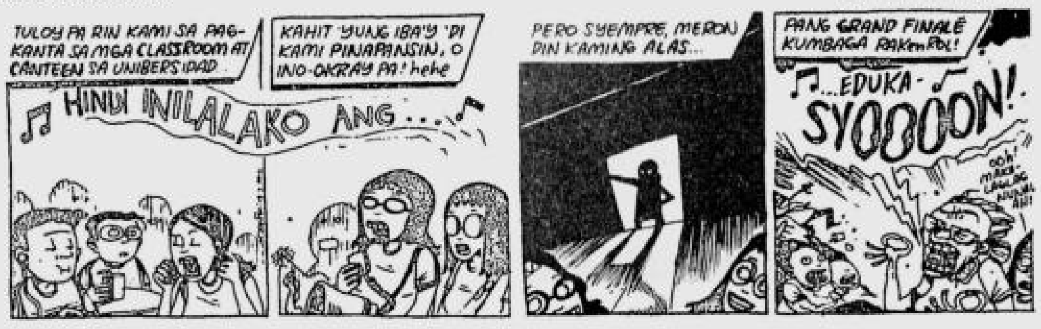
ATOMO AND WEBOY
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


LOOKY! I GOT ANOTHER SHINY GARBAGE CAN!
THIS ONE I'LL CALL MY GARBAGE CAN OF MENTAL CLUTTER.
THIS GOES ON TOP OF MY HEAD SO DISPOSAL IS AUTOMATIC.
YOU DON'T SEEM IMPRESSED.

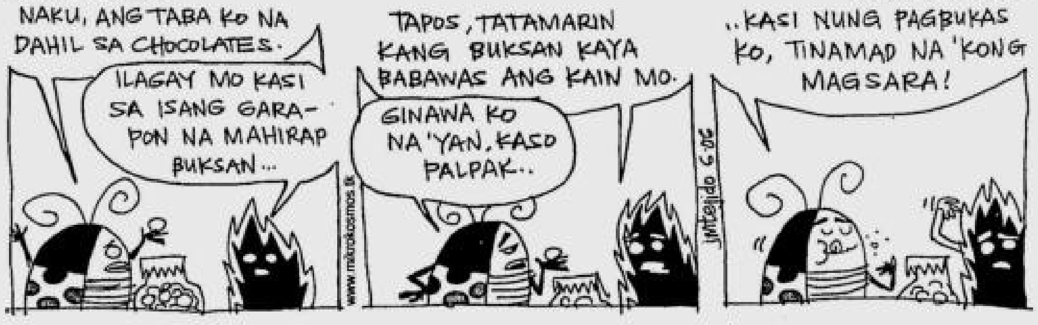
DIVINE COMEDY
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


BANG
BANG
BANG
BANG
PING
PTING
NGIII!!
NAG-RICOCHET!

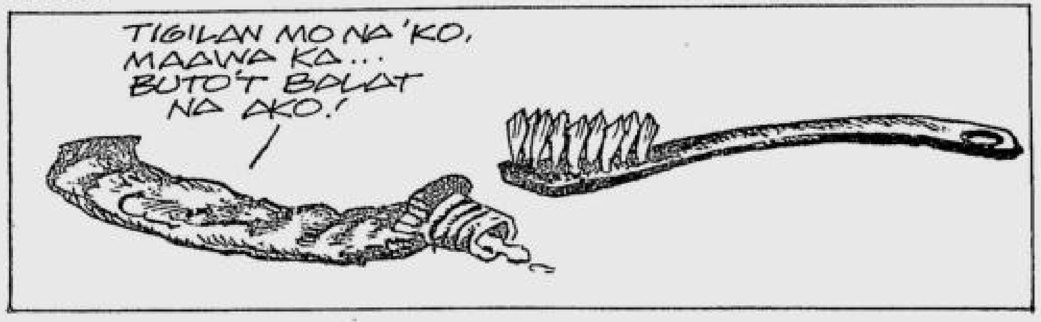
KIKO MACHINE
BY MANIX ABRERA


TULOY PA RIN KAMI SA PAG-KANTA SA MGA CLASSROOM AT CANTEEN SA UNIBERSIDAD
KAHIT 'YUNG IBA'Y 'DI KAMI PINAPANSIN, O INO-OKRAY PA! hehe
HINDI INILALAKO ANG...
PERO SYEMPRE, MERON DIN KAMING ALAS...
PANG GRAND FINALE KUMBAGA RAKenROL!
...EDUKA-SYOOOON!

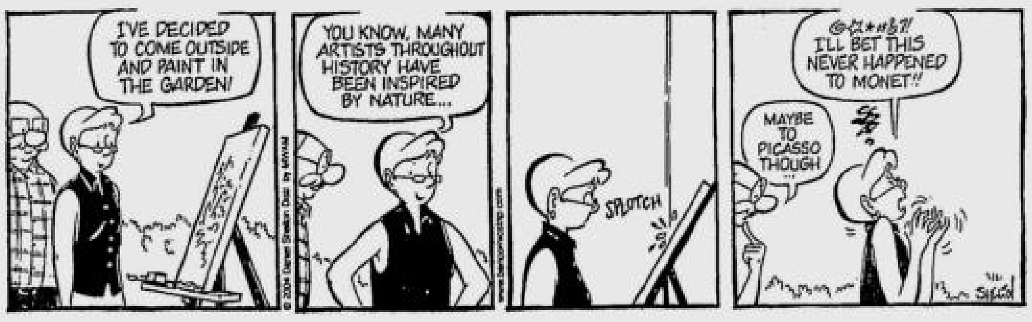
MIKROKOSMOS
BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAKU, ANG TABA KO NA DAHIL SA CHOCOLATES.
ILAGAY MO KASI SA ISANG GARA-PON NA MAHIRAP BUKSAN...
TAPOS, TATAMARIN KANG BUKSAN KAYA BABAWAS ANG KAIN MO.
GINAWA KO NA 'YAN, KASO PALPAK..
..KASI NUNG PAGBUKAS KO, TINAMAD NA 'KONG MAGSARA!
www.mikrokosmos.tk

TULDOK
BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


TIGILAN MO NA 'KO, MAAWA KA... BUTO'T BALAT NA AKO!

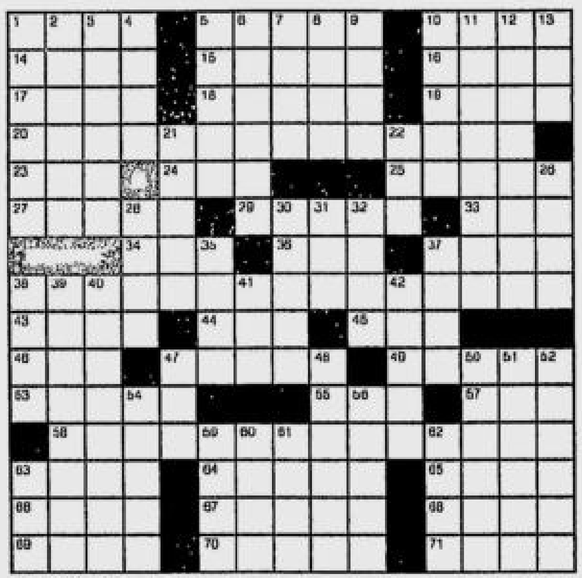
BEN
BY DANIEL SHELTON


I'VE DECIDED TO COME OUTSIDE AND PAINT IN THE GARDEN!
YOU KNOW, MANY ARTISTS THROUGHOUT HISTORY HAVE BEEN INSPIRED BY NATURE...
SPLOTCH
@☆*#$?! I'LL BET THIS NEVER HAPPENED TO MONET!!
MAYBE TO PICASSO THOUGH...

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 All aflutter
5 Trite
10 Fed. agent
14 Fried tortilla
15 Puccini pieces
16 Wife of Charlie Chaplin
17 Como __ Usted?
18 Ocean ray
19 100 fractions
20 Chance it
23 KO count
24 Pres. advisory grp.
25 Florida citrus center
27 Knight's mount
29 Nudge
33 Cry out loud
34 City in central Israel
36 Sea eagle
37 Plumbing conduit
38 Chance it
43 Currier's partner
44 Stephen of "Fear Dot Com"
45 Mrs. in Mexico
46 Harden
47 Cheri of "SNL"
49 Speechify
53 Goof
55 Snooze
57 "Saving Private Ryan" extras
58 Chance it, with caution
63 Member fees
64 Met production
65 "Picnic" playwright
66 556 in letters
67 Writer Jones
68 German river
69 Wide shoe
70 Engulf
71 Unwanted lip

DOWN
1 Banned big bangs
2 O-ring, e.g.
3 Gasoline rating
4 Mohair source
5 Aegean island
6 Hypnotic state
7 Questionable contraction?
8 Plaster backing
9 Actor Morales
10 Subject for discussion
11 Soft shoe
12 Pronghorn, e.g.
13 Certain mil. installation
21 Provide financing for
22 Immediately!
26 Aid in crime
28 BPOE members
30 "The Merry Widow" composer
31 Sib of a sis
32 Serious responsibility
35 Hit the __!
37 Carson's predecessor
38 Perspicacious
39 Use veto power
40 Go get
41 NFL prop
42 Figurative use of a word
47 Mork's planet
48 Lined up
50 Committee list
51 Slight degrees of color
52 Aromatic compounds
54 Actor Davis
56 One more time
59 Shape
60 Simon Says player
61 Sleuth Wolfe
62 __ van der Rohe
63 HST follower



By Philip J. Anderson
Portland, OR
7/19/06

Tuesday's Puzzle Solved

U	S	U	A	L	■	S	L	A	P	■	R	E	N	T
N	A	N	N	Y	■	P	A	R	R	■	E	R	A	S
F	U	D	G	E	J	U	D	G	E	■	L	I	S	P
E	D	U	■	■	E	D	D	■	F	A	I	N	T	S
D	I	E	O	F	F	■	■	B	A	N	E	■	■	■
■	■	■	T	O	F	F	E	E	C	O	F	F	E	E
S	P	A	T	E	■	O	L	S	E	N	■	A	R	F
O	A	T	S	■	G	R	E	E	D	■	B	R	I	T
A	R	M	■	M	O	U	N	T	■	P	E	E	K	S
K	I	S	S	E	S	M	I	S	S	E	S	■	■	■
■	■	■	H	I	S	S	■	■	T	A	S	T	E	S
S	A	B	E	N	A	■	K	S	U	■	■	U	S	A
K	L	E	E	■	M	I	N	T	S	H	I	N	T	S
E	A	R	N	■	E	V	E	N	■	A	R	I	E	S
W	I	T	S	■	R	Y	E	S	■	M	A	S	S	Y

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7/18/06

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You love beauty—especially in terms of light, form, composition and movement. Many of you are physically graceful. You have mood swings at times because you're quite emotional. (But you're aware of how you act in the company of others.) In the year ahead, increased solitude will give you the opportunity to learn something valuable to you.
Birthdate of: Brian May, guitarist; Anthony Edwards, actor; Atom Egoyan, director.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): This is a good day for business and for shopping. You might want to buy a gift for a loved one. Conversations with family members, especially parents, go well.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): This is a strong day for you because the Moon is in your sign. Furthermore, it makes lovely aspects to Mercury and the Sun. This promotes all your communication with everyone you meet.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You might enjoy a little bit of solitude today. You need time to do some thinking. You're a very mental, intellectual and curious person.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Conversations with a female friend will be excellent today. Perhaps you need to confide in someone; perhaps someone needs to confide in you.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): For some reason, you'll be briefly in the public life today. People will notice you. With this in mind, look your best. You like to create a good impression on your audience.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Do something different today. Go someplace you've never been before. Visit different stores or restaurants. Talk to people from different cultures and other lands. (You need this stimulation!)

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): This is an excellent time to decide how to divide something between you and someone else. People are reasonable today (including you).

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): With the Moon opposite your sign today, you might feel that others oppose what you have to say. Listen carefully to what others want. You'll know what to do.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is a good day to putter around work and home in order to finish off little tasks on your to-do list. You want things to run more smoothly in your life.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): What a playful, romantic day! You want exciting romance in your life. You want to play and have fun. At least do something that makes you feel like you're on vacation.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Home, family and real estate matters are your primary focus today. Discussions with parents could be significant. Cocoon at home if you can.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): This busy day can be very successful and productive. Conversations with others will go well. Run around and take care of errands. Short trips are favored. Talk to siblings.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku
by Dave Green

3	9							7
					3	4		8
	8				1			
	1	9	6		8			
				5				
			9		4	8	6	
			5				2	
7		5	1					
2							3	1

Difficulty Level ★★★
7/19

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

1	8	4	2	9	6	3	7	5
9	2	5	4	7	3	1	6	8
6	3	7	8	1	5	2	9	4
3	6	9	1	2	4	5	8	7
4	5	1	7	3	8	9	2	6
2	7	8	6	5	9	4	3	1
5	4	2	9	8	7	6	1	3
7	1	6	3	4	2	8	5	9
8	9	3	5	6	1	7	4	2

Difficulty Level ★★

Are these serious credentials, or what?

HERE ARE FOUR MORE "ROCK STAR: SUpernova" contenders. Today is another performance day (Starworld), and tomorrow, one of the remaining 13 finalists is going home.

JENNY GALT, singer/songwriter/stage actor

Hometown: Vancouver, British Columbia

Montreal-born Jenny Galt has been playing piano and singing since age 6. She picked up the guitar at 16 and moved to Ottawa. After performing solo at clubs and following a short stint as a member of the band, Scout, she packed up and moved to Australia, where she performed at theaters, clubs and concert halls. She has toured Canada several times, playing major festivals as a member of the recently disbanded Cherrybomb.

JILL GIOIA, singer/songwriter/actor

Hometown: Franklin Square, New York

No stranger to fame, Jill Gioia already has a pair of sexy boots named after her—Steve Madden's "Jill Joy" boot! Married, Jill tours the country performing music with her husband, who's currently touring with Billy Joel. Owner of some of the most powerful pipes in the competition, she has sung the US national anthem for the New York Knicks in Madison Square Garden, performed in the Bali Benefit Concert with INXS, Jeffrey Gaines and Gloria Gaynor, and has done backup for many a great artist and voice-overs for national commercials. She's also got a song, "Don't Make Me Wait," which went gold in Spain.

LUKAS ROSSI, singer/songwriter

Hometown: Toronto and Ontario, Canada

With a voice like Freddie Mercury meets Jeff Buckley, Lukas has written, co-produced and sung on various albums for many Canadian bands, including his own, Cleavage. He has toured with the Tea Party, Papa Roach, Edwin, I Mother Earth and Big Wreck, and recorded demos with producer Alex Lifeson (guitar player from the rock band Rush), and worked with Jay and John Levine from the Philosopher Kings and Prozac. EMI Music Canada gave him a publishing deal in 2004. Adding to his long list of impressive achievements, Lukas has also worked with producer Dave Tyson and recorded demos with Gavin Brown, after which the band Rise Electric. His unique, hybrid voice is also heard on cartoon shows and radio/TV commercials.

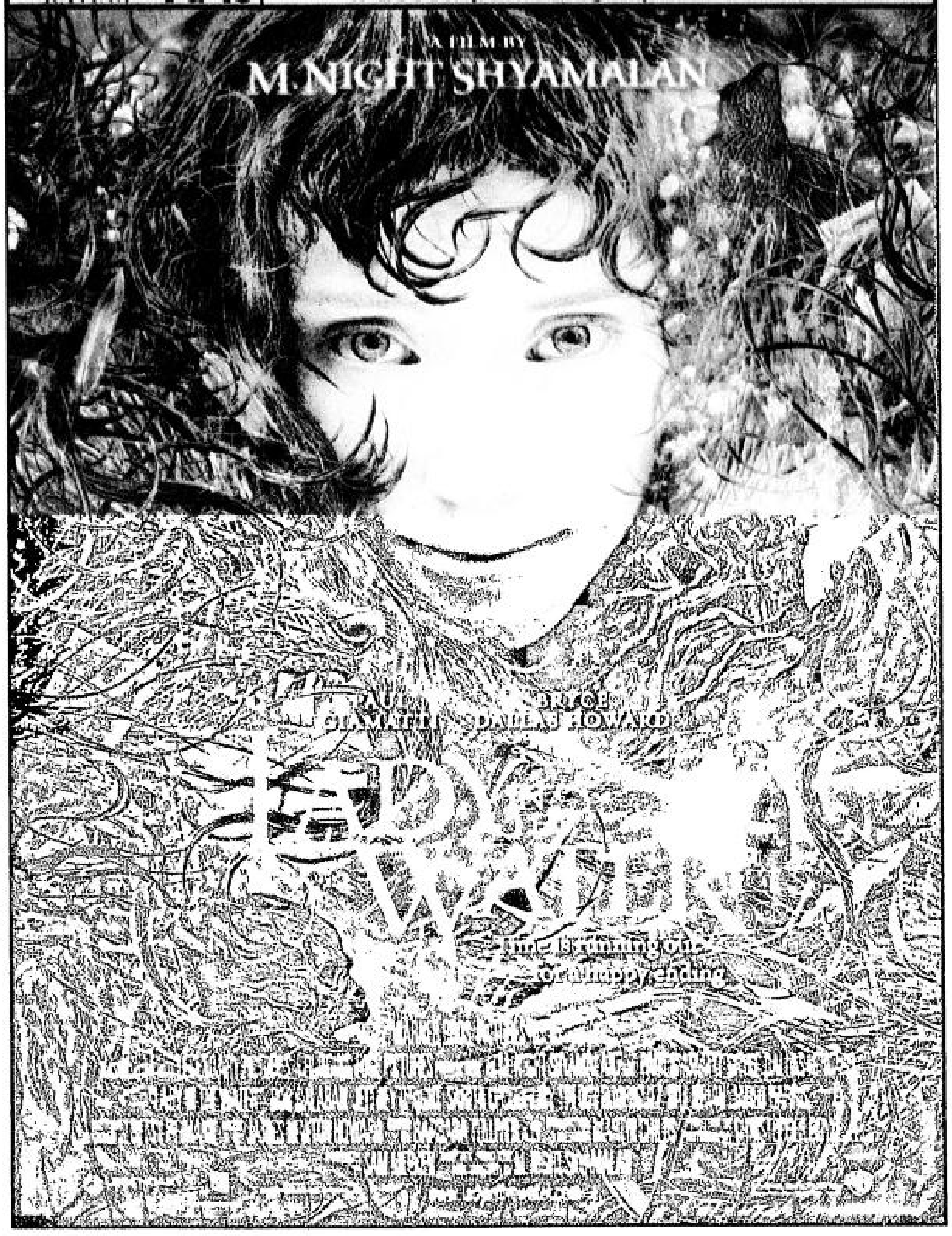
MAGNI ASGEIRSSON, musician

Hometown: Reykjavik, Iceland

Born in Egilsstadir in East Iceland as the third of four kids, Magni started his band at age 11. By age 15, he had performed numerous times in public but he didn't get serious about music until he went to boarding school. His first real band, Shape, released an album in 1997. In 1999, he gravitated toward the up-and-coming pop band, A Moti Sol, which prompted his move to Reykjavik. The band has since become one of the biggest pop acts in Iceland and performed over a hundred times throughout Iceland, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Luxembourg and the famous cavern club in Liverpool. Out of the six albums they released, two went gold. Currently, their new single is in his home country's Top Five in all the radio and download charts. That's serious creed, by any measure.

(The last five finalists tomorrow.)

GRAND OPENING TODAY!
MTRCB PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult



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Chance [illegible]
in the [illegible]
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1. Consumer buys specially marked packs of M&M's® Chocolate: Milk, Peanut, Crispy or Minis with an M&M's® Fun and Fortune sticker from any participating establishments. Each pack will have a unique alphanumeric raffle code printed on it.
2. To join the promo, just text MPIRATE RAFFLE CODE NAME/ADDRESS/AGE to 29767 for Globe, Touch Mobile, Smart, Addict Mobile, Talk n' Text, & Sun Cellular subscribers. P2.50 will be charged per text message sent.
Example: MPIRATE A1234/John Reyes/234 Ruby St. Makati City/30
For succeeding entries, just type MPIRATE Raffle Code
Example: MPIRATE B5678
3. M&M's® packs with the Fun and Fortune stickers must be kept and shall be presented for verification purposes in order to claim the prize.
4. Promo will run from June 15-August 31, 2006.
5. Prizes include: 1 unit Volvo S40, 10 units Sony Ericsson W810i Walkman Phones & 30 units Apple Video I-Pods.
6. Draws will be held on July 3, July 17, July 31, August 14, August 28, 2006. Grand draw will be on Sept. 8, 2006.
7. All entries are cumulative. Non-winning entries will qualify for the succeeding draws. The more entries sent, the more chances of winning.
8. Cut-off dates for entries Sunday, 11:59pm prior to the draw date. For the Grand Draw, cut-off date will be on July31, 2006 at 11:59pm.
9. Draws will be held at the Information Gateway office in the presence of a representative from BFAD, Information Gateway and Master Foods Philippines, Inc.
10. Winners will receive a call with accompanying instructions on how to claim their prize. They must be prepared to surrender the M&M's® chocolate wrapper with the winning raffle code. Damaged, altered and/or tampered stickers, as well as wrappers with no promo stickers and vice versa will be disqualified and rendered invalid.
11. Verification procedures will be enforced to ensure validity and authenticity of the promo sticker and wrapper. Representatives from BFAD and Master Foods Philippines, Inc. will conduct the verification procedures.
12. Verified winners will then be eligible to claim their prize.
13. Prizes are non-transferable and not convertible to cash.
14. All prizes are tax paid.
15. Employees of Master Foods Philippines, Inc., all their agencies, suppliers, partners and sponsors, including their relatives up to the second degree of consanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining the promotion.

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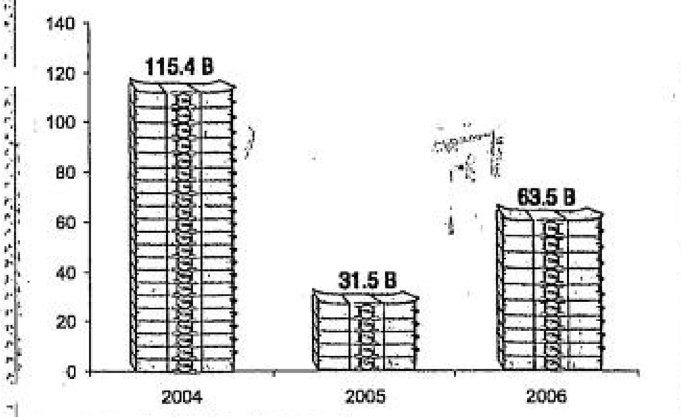
Gov't borrowed ₱302B in 1st 6 months

INQUIRER MONITOR
Figures that matter in our nation's life

Approved FDIs on the rise (In billion pesos, first quarter 2003-2006)

Foreign direct investments in the first quarter of 2006 rose more than 100 percent compared to the same period last year. But this still failed to match the P115.4-billion total in 2004, which is the highest quarterly FDI turnout since 1997.



Source: National Statistical Coordinating Board
Kate V. Pedroso PDI Research

Nearly 80% used to repay maturing obligations

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT BORROWED P302.54 BILLION IN the first six months of the year to help cover its financing requirements, an amount lower than what was programmed for the period due to spending controls.

Of the amount borrowing in the first half, P235.14 billion, or about 78 percent, were used to service matured obligations.

The actual amount of liabilities incurred in the first semester was 2-percent higher than the P296.59 billion recorded a year ago, but was 1.3 percent lower than the P306.58 billion in programmed borrowings for the period as stated under the fiscal program for 2006.

Although the government initially intended to relax spending and shift to pump-priming mode this year, budget authorities were forced to limit spending following the failure

GOV'T/B4

RP, Japan approve tax treaty

JAPAN HAS REACHED BASIC AGREEMENTS with the Philippines and France to modify bilateral tax treaties to further promote investment and build closer economic ties, the Japanese Finance Ministry announced in Tokyo yesterday.

Under the treaty with the Philippines, Japan has agreed to reduce tax rates on cross-border investments such as those on dividends, interest and royalties, although the specific tax rate has not been decided.

It will also set a limit on tax breaks for direct investment to 10 years, but will broaden the range of investments that will benefit from those breaks.

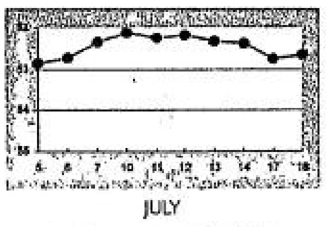
The revised treaty with France, on the other hand, will pave the way for substantial reductions of withholding taxes, making it on par with revised treaties with the United States and Britain.

Under the revised treaty, withholding taxes

RP/B3

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



JULY

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

₱52.65 = $

As of 5 p.m., July 18, 2006

STOCK MARKET

Stocks rise

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.76-percent higher yesterday as investors took positions ahead of upcoming second quarter corporate results, dealers said.

They said some bargain-hunters emerged after oil prices eased overnight while the government's budget surplus for June helped sentiment overall.

However, light volumes reflected a generally cautious mood as investors remain wary escalating violence in the Middle East.

The composite index closed up 16.57 points at 2,191.78, after trading between 2,166.51 and 2,201.92. *AFP*

IN THIS ISSUE
PNB reports 35% growth in 6-month profit to P425M /B2
Planned lifting of QRs on rice opposed /B4

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PNB reports 35% growth in 6-month profit to ₱425M

Aims to recover top spot in remittance business

By Michelle V. Remo

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL BANK POSTED A net income of P425 million in the first half of the year, up 35 percent from a year ago, due to increased earnings from its remittance and foreign exchange businesses.

PNB president Omar Mier said in a briefing that the first-semester net income placed the bank in a comfortable position to meet its full-year target of earning P760 million.

Mier said the biggest source of growth was its remittance business, which is expected to reach $2.4 billion for PNB this year compared with last year's $2.2 billion.

He said though that PNB, which used to be have the highest remittance revenues in the industry, was displaced from the top spot last year by Bank of the Philippine Islands, which facilitated $2.4 billion in remittances last year.

"We want to recover that (top spot) and we will work doubly hard to fulfill that," Mier said. He explained that PNB would reshuffle heads of regional operations of its remittance business and enhance capacity for faster delivery of remittances.

PNB said other major sources of revenue growth in the first half included fee-based income from its treasury operations, interest income from its lending activities, and income from the sale of nonperforming assets (NPAs).

PNB has P55 billion worth of NPAs. Of the amount, P28 billion is in the form of real and other properties owned or acquired (ropoa) while the remaining P27 billion is in the form of nonperforming loans.

The bank announced that it intended to dispose as much as P10 billion worth of NPLs in the next three months using the incentives provided under the Special Purpose Vehicle law.

"These (NPLs) are not dead assets. They just don't earn interest on a daily basis, but they have value and can be converted into cash," said Carmen Huang, PNB executive vice president.

PNB said these NPLs were mostly loans obtained by medium-sized companies, noting that big-ticket loans have already been converted into active accounts.

Meanwhile, PNB said it was set to float bonds to support its financing requirement for the year. While it has gotten an approval from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas to raise as much as P5 billion, it targets to initially raise P3 billion.

PNB said indicative coupon rate for the bonds, which will mature in 10 years, would be 10 percent. The bonds will have a call option feature on the fifth year.

Lepanto sets 1-for-8 stock rights offering

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

TOP GOLD PRODUCER LEPANTO CONSOLIdated Mining Co. has secured board approval to raise P639 million from a one-for-eight stock rights offer.

This will be the second stock rights offer to be undertaken by the company since its one-for-five rights issue last October that raised P850 million, which Lepanto used to retire debts, pay back shareholder advances and utilities-related costs.

Under the proposed stock rights offer, shareholders can subscribe to one Lepanto common share for every eight shares they hold at 20 centavos each, the company said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE).

Lepanto's "A" shares closed at 29 centavos while the "B" shares traded at 33 centavos yesterday.

Should it secure approval from regulators, the company plans to issue the stock rights starting Sept. 11 to shareholders on record as of Aug. 16.

Proceeds from the offer will be used to pay P219 million in debts maturing this year, pay back $3 million to shareholders for advances made to Canadian mining firm Ivanhoe and to pay employee-related accounts.

After suspending operations in 2001, Lepanto is reopening its copper-gold mine in Mankayan, Benguet Province, after seeing the surge in metal prices, Lepanto chair Felipe Yap had said.

Development cost for the copper mine is estimated at more than P1 billion. The mine is also projected to generate 7,000 tons of copper concentrate on its first year of production.

Copper prices have risen to a high of $3 a pound in the international market this year from a low of 70 cents in 2001. The low copper prices made it difficult to continue operating the copper mine in 2001.

Yap had said that Lepanto's copper mine would start commercial operations by September.

LEPANTO/ B4

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Megaworld taps Marriott for hotel project

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

MEGAWORLD CORP., THE COUNTRY'S most active office developer, is building a P3 billion hotel-resort at its Newport City project in Pasay City.

The seven-hectare hotel-resort will be managed by Marriott Hotels International B.V.

It will start construction within the year and may open by 2009.

In a disclosure yesterday to the Philippine Stock Exchange, Megaworld said its majority-owned subsidiary Travellers International Hotel Group Inc. has signed a management agreement with Marriott. Under the agreement, Travellers engaged Marriott to manage and operate the first-class, full-service international hotel in front of the Villamor golf course.

The hotel will have 356 guest rooms.

Under service agreements entered into by Travellers with Marriott affiliates, Marriott agreed to provide technical and other services during the construction of the hotel such as international advertising, marketing, promotion, employee training programs and reservation and property management.

Marriott also extended to Travellers the right and the license to use within Manila the Marriott trademarks for hotel services and related goods and services.

Company sources said Megaworld would fund the construction of the hotel through a combination of internally generated funds and loans.

Megaworld was earlier studying a plan to raise $100 million from the debt market by the second half this year. Proceeds from the bond offer will be used to fund various projects, it said. The size of the offer has yet to be finalized.

Megaworld had said it was earmarking P7 billion over a three- to four-year period for the first phase of its 25-hectare hotel and residential project dubbed "Newport City" at the Villamor air base in Pasay. The first phase involves the 350-room Marriott Hotel, a residential area and a commercial and sports complex.

Marriott Hotel at Newport City will be the second Marriott in the country after Cebu. Aside from its key hotel development, Megaworld is also building a 3.2-hectare, 16-building residential resort, the first in the Newport City.

Megaworld envisions its Newport City as a new paradise resort residence.

Newport City will host a world-class hotel, and first-rate entertainment and sports facilities beside the existing 60-hectare, 18-hole Villamor golf course. Megaworld is the developer of the property owned by the state-run Bases Conversion Development Authority (BCDA).

Under the second phase, Newport City will include a business park and a shopping and entertainment hub. Newport City borders the Villamor golf course on the east side and is a five-minute drive from Magallanes Village.

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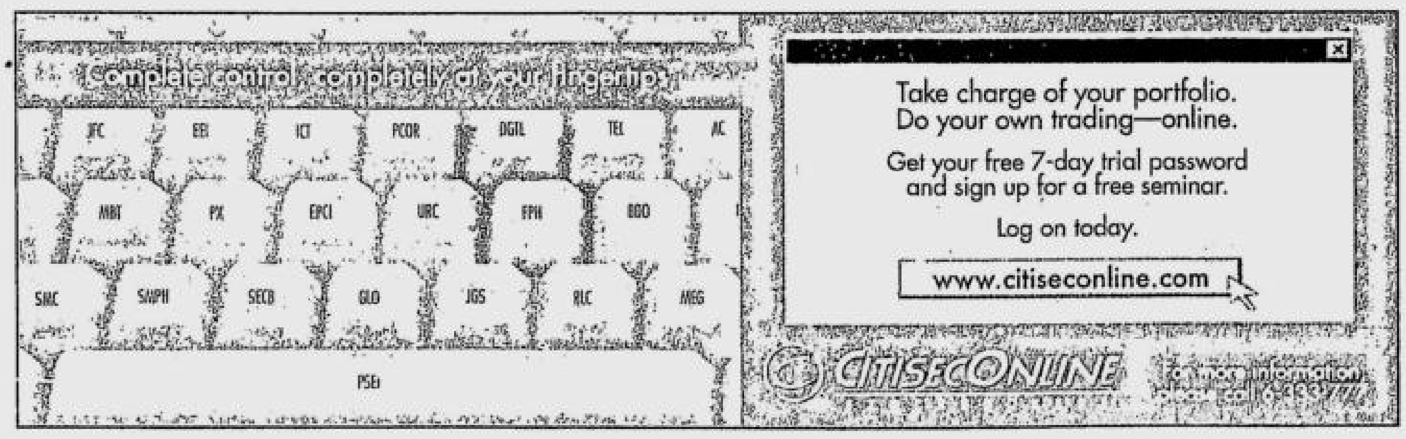

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PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of July 18, 2006)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	1,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	31.5	31.5	31.5	31.5	78,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	49	49.5	48.5	48.5	950,500
China Banking Corp.	860	860	850	850	1,450
Citystate Savings Bank	20.5	20.5	20.5	20.5	400
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	220,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	73	74	73	73.5	204,900
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	34.5	35	34.5	35	470,000
Philippine National Bank	33.5	33.5	33.5	33.5	19,300
Phil. Savings Bank	39	39	39	39	4,200
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	18	18	18	18	10,000
Security Bank Corp.	46	47	46	47	5,000
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
Citiseconline Com Inc.	1.7	1.72	1.7	1.7	183,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	30	31	30	31	12,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1610	1610	1610	1610	60
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2005	2005	2000	2000	430
Ivantage Corp.	1.24	1.32	1.24	1.28	3,063,000
INDUSTRIAL					
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
First Gen Corp.	43.5	44	43.5	44	15,100
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	44.5	44.5	44	44	448,100
Manila Electric Co. A	14.75	15	14.75	15	24,000
Manila Electric Co. B	23.75	24.25	23.75	24.25	520,500
Manila Water Co. Inc.	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.6	304,000
Petron Corp.	3.8	3.95	3.8	3.95	2,063,000
Salcon Power Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	27,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.93	0.93	0.92	0.92	370,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
CADP Group Corp.	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.3	1,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	23.25	23.25	23.25	23.25	31,700
Jollibee Foods Corp.	30.5	31	30.5	30.5	309,900
Roxas Holdings Inc.	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	365,000
San Miguel Corp. A	65.5	66	65	66	41,800
San Miguel Corp. B	70	70.5	70	70.5	488,700
Universal Robina Corp.	19.5	19.5	19.25	19.25	958,100
Vitarich Corp.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	200,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.26	820,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	1.46	1.52	1.46	1.5	1,803,000
Republic Cement Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	58,000
CHEMICALS					
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.63	0.63	0.63	0.63	10,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Global Equities Inc.	0.0825	0.0825	0.08	0.08	1,100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	42,000,000
Ayala Corp.	382.5	382.5	380	385	95,940
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.2	272,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.026	0.024	0.025	23,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.8	1.82	1.8	1.8	314,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.9	0.91	0.9	0.9	540,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.3	1.3	1.3	1.3	20,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10	10.25	10	10.25	48,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.06	1,251,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	3.75	3.8	3.75	3.8	100,000
F&J Princ.E Holdings Corp.	0.77	0.77	0.77	0.77	20,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	6.1	6.1	6	6	74,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.115	0.115	0.115	0.115	240,000
SM Investments Corp.	211	219	211	217	102,930
South China Resources Inc.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	120,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	1,900,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	12	12.25	12	12	9,562,600
Belle Corp.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	6,755,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	1,000,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	2.16	2.16	2.14	2.16	541,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	100,000
Empire East Land Inc	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	1,250,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.28	1.3	1.28	1.3	3,331,000
Interport Res. B	0.005	0.005	0.005	0.005	1,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.205	0.205	0.205	0.205	1,450,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	500,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.36	1.4	1.36	1.4	17,771,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.205	0.205	0.2	0.2	930,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	23,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	100,000
SM Development Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	11,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.5	7.7	7.4	7.7	2,119,000
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.69	0.69	0.69	0.69	10,000
SERVICE					
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	16	16.25	16	16.25	6,000
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.18	1.22	1.18	1.22	412,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	950	965	940	955	29,800
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.3	3.45	3.25	3.45	2,258,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1810	1860	1805	1840	124,460
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.175	0.175	0.17	0.17	380,000
Ionics Inc.	1.84	1.84	1.84	1.84	30,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.16	1.16	157,000
Philweb Corp.	0.031	0.032	0.031	0.032	8,900,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	14.25	14.25	14	14	330,100
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.2	0.205	0.195	0.195	680,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.5	60,000
EDUCATION					
Centro Escolar University	8.4	8.5	8.4	8.4	26,000
iPeople Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.05	3.1	303,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.08	2.18	2.08	2.16	1,906,000
Paxys Inc.	10.25	10.75	10.25	10.75	56,700
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	3.5	3.65	3.45	3.55	1,201,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	3.6	3.6	3.5	3.55	961,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	15,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	335,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	5,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	15,680,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	9,680,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.024	0.025	0.024	0.025	556,900,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.027	0.028	0.027	0.028	241,900,000
Omico Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	263,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	3.95	4.05	3.95	4	1,468,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	4	4	3.95	4	4,285,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	26.5	27	26.5	27	714,700
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.36	0.36	0.36	0.36	390,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	550,000
OIL					
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	120,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	404,900,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	19,400,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	1.22	1.24	1.2	1.24	765,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	1.24	1.26	1.24	1.24	730,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	110,500
PREFERRED					
PLDT (10% Pref) Series M	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series O	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series T	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	5,700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	300
WARRANTS, PHIL. DEPOSIT RECEIPTS, ETC.					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	16.5	16.5	16.25	16.25	252,700

DISCLOSURES

RAMON Y. Sy has been elected vice chair of the board of directors of **Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co.** on July 17.

***

MACONDRAY Plastics Inc. has disclosed their repurchase of 20,000 common shares at an average price of P3.00 each on July 17.

***

THE PHILIPPINE Long Distance Telephone Co. has disclosed the listing of 728 common shares on July 18.

***

AYALA Land Inc. has disclosed the listing of 1,229,502 common shares on July 18, bringing the total number of common shares under the company's Executive Stock Option Plan and Employee Stock Ownership Plan to 62,431,296.

Compiled by Kate Pedroso, PDI Research

CURRENCIES

July 18, 2006 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.798722	1.000000	52.6080
Japan	Yen	0.006815	0.008532	0.4489
United Kingdom	Pound	1.452796	1.818900	95.6887
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.102724	0.128611	6.7660
Switzerland	Franc	0.640002	0.801282	42.1538
Canada	Dollar	0.702729	0.879817	46.2854
Singapore	Dollar	0.501300	0.627628	33.0183
Australia	Dollar	0.598473	0.749288	39.4185
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.118795	2.652731	139.5549
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.212981	0.266652	14.0280
Brunei	Dollar	0.499732	0.625665	32.9150
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000086	0.000108	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.020915	0.026185	1.3775
UAE	Dirham	0.217470	0.272272	14.3237
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.252000	65.8652
Argentina	Peso	0.259115	0.324412	17.0667
Brazil	Real	0.360907	0.451855	23.7712
Denmark	Kroner	0.134046	0.167825	8.8289
India	Rupee	0.017125	0.021441	1.1280
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.216573	0.271150	14.2647
Mexico	New Peso	0.072767	0.091104	4.7928
New Zealand	Dollar	0.496811	0.622007	32.7225
Norway	Kroner	0.126236	0.158048	8.3146
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013255	0.016595	0.8730
South Africa	Rand	0.110383	0.138200	7.2704
Korea	Won	0.000838	0.001049	0.0552
Sweden	Kroner	0.108345	0.135648	7.1362
Syria	Pound	0.015387	0.019264	1.0134
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024313	0.030440	1.6014
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000372	0.000466	0.0245

RP...

From page B1

on dividends will be reduced to 10 percent from 15 percent while the withholding tax on royalties, currently set at 10 percent, will be eliminated.

Japan has been stepping up efforts to revise tax treaties in recent years. Revising a treaty with the United States in 2003 was a breakthrough, and Japan hopes to revise tax treaties with other leading industrial countries in the near future, such as the Netherlands. It has already agreed on revisions with Britain.

The new treaty with France will also provide tax deductions on social security payments to avoid double taxation. The changes came in the wake of a revised Japan-France treaty on social insurance. *Reuters*

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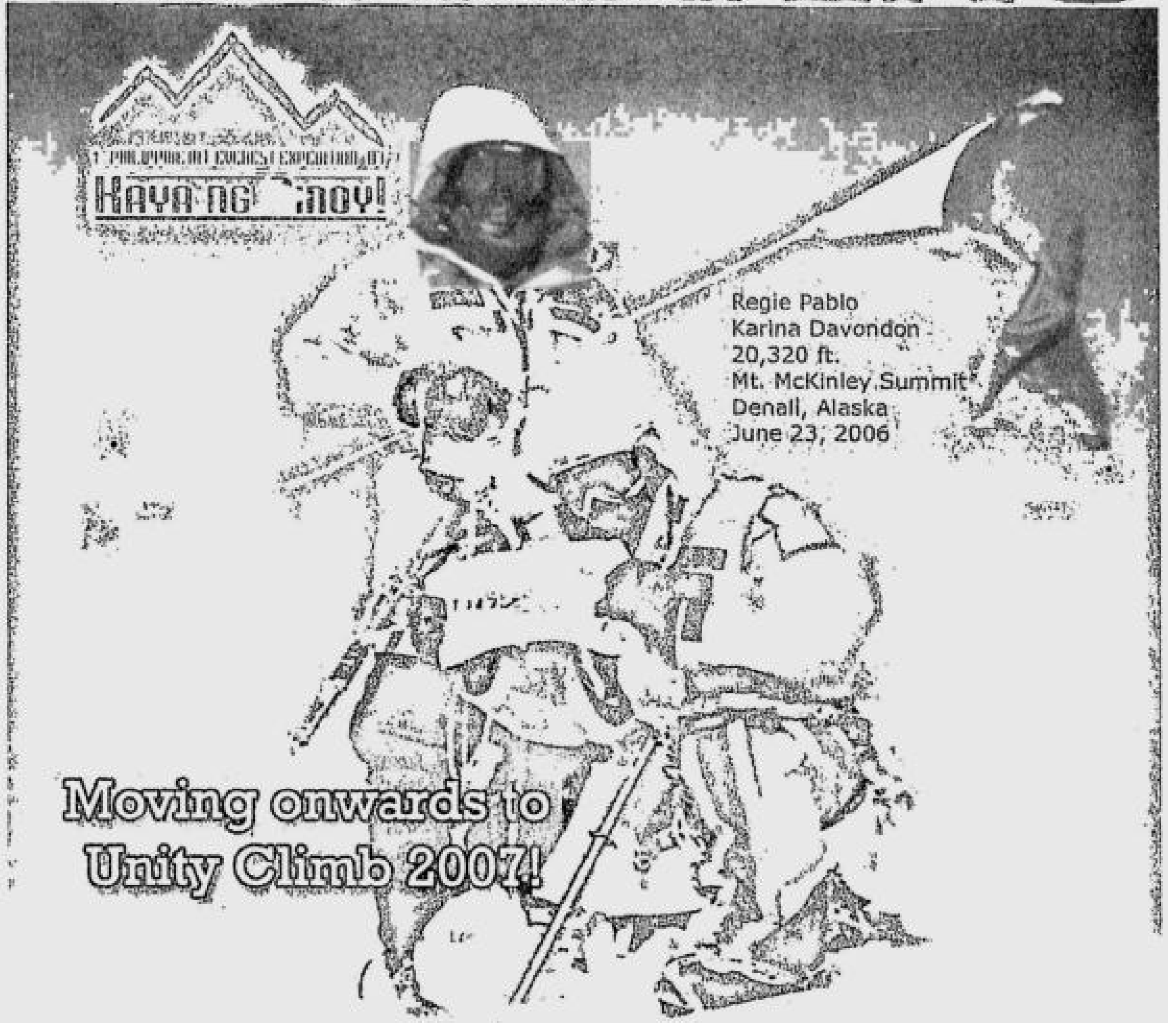

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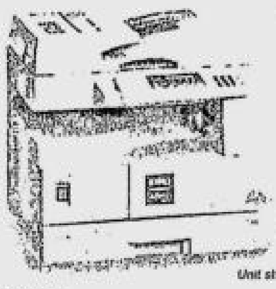
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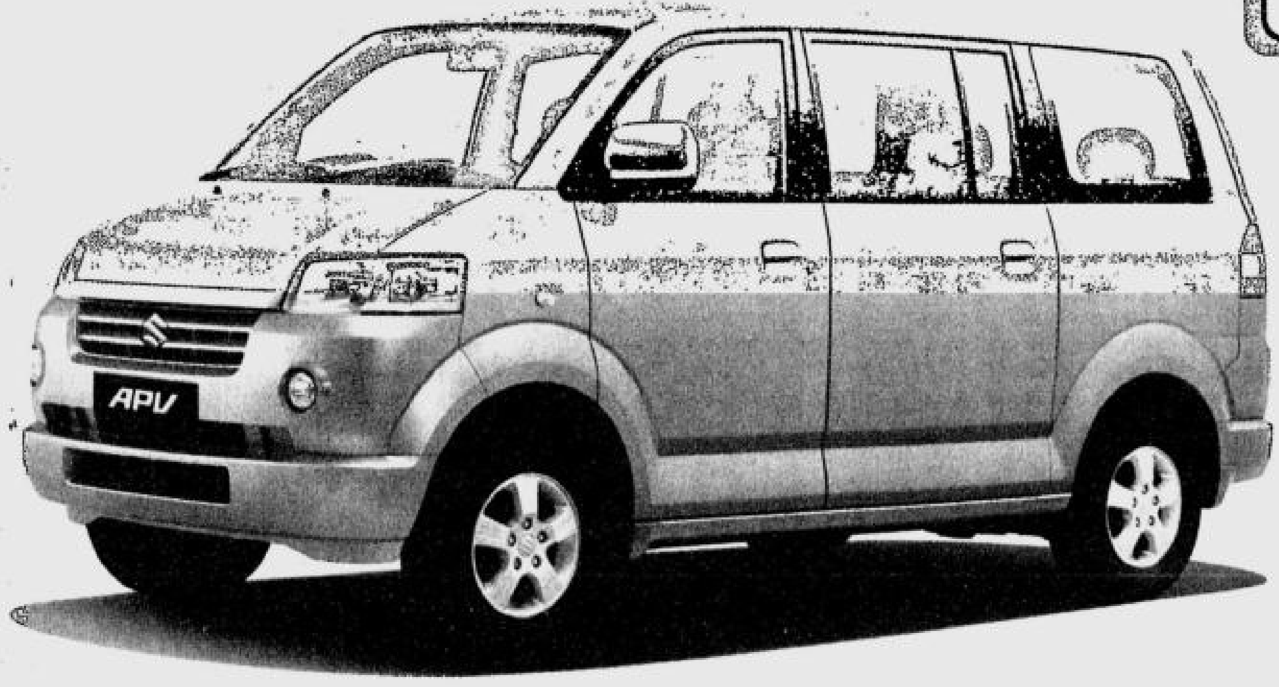

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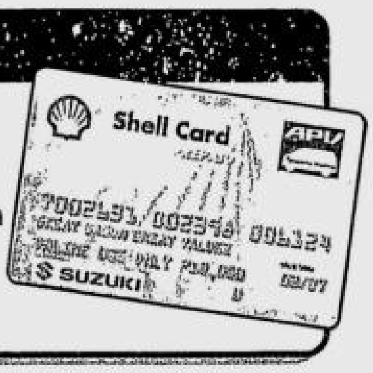

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Motorcycles: The unheralded success story

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

CAR SALES MAY BE DOWN IN the first half of the year, but the bigger, largely ignored story is that sales of motorcycles continue to post double-digit increases.

After selling 300,000 motorcyles last year—in contrast, the local car manufacturers cleared only 102,000 cars, SUVs, and AUVs last year—Honda is inaugurating today a P1-billion assembly plant in Sto. Tomas, Batangas, which can produce 300,000 bikes a year on two-shift work schedule.

Still, by 2010, that new plant would already be overwhelmed by demand, with Honda sales alone projected to reach one million units a year, according to Honda spokesman Arnel Doria.

Ironically, the tide of cheap bikes from China, instead of strangling the local players, eventually helped Honda and the industry.

Rather than helplessly trying to stem the dumping by the Chinese competition, what Honda did was to go straight to and collaborate with the Chinese manufacturers so that their parts would become interchangeable with Honda's.

As a result, the P20,000-throwaway bikes from China became the backbone of a thriving after-sales bike parts industry for Philippine Honda, Doria said.

The bigger sales spur was provided of late by the soaring gas prices, and easy-on-the-pocket payment scheme.

Betting on increased demand, one bold provincial Honda dealer even came up and started an industry standard, a P3,000-downpayment, P1,000-month installment plan for the best-selling 50-cc model.

The monthly payment translates to P33.33 a day, about the same amount a worker would spend for daily FX transport fare.

All these incremental developments produced a peculiar Philippine phenomenon.

Whereas the rest of Southeast Asian countries started with motorcyles, and gradually worked their way up to develop their respective car industries, the Philippines started with car manufacturing, before going downstream to the two-wheeled transport.

The same apparently is what is happening in the provinces and Metro Manila.

Whereas the tricycles in the provinces are all getting to be motorized and displacing their pedal-powered parents, such primitive contraptions have been finding their way into and clogging Metro Manila roads, especially in the poorer districts.

But, that, as they say, is another story.

Untangled in Tali

THE RIGHT of Tali Beach resident Fausto Preysler Jr. to bring in heavy equipment and construction personnel to his adjoining beachside property, which is outside the subdivision, has been upheld by the Supreme Court.

The Tali Beach developer, the Bernasconi family, has fought Preysler for 10 years not only in court but also in the subdivision by barricading the entrance/exit to his beach property.

An insurance broker and honorary consul-general of Costa Rica, Preysler has no road access to his beach property except through the Tali subdivision.

The Supreme Court, in the meantime, left it to the Nasugbu Regional Trial Court to determine the indemnity due to the subdivision for the temporary easement.

Money-go-round

- BY November, the salaries for judges shall double such that the lowest pay package, that of a Municipal Trial Court judge's, will amount to about P50,000 a month.

The better pay would hopefully ease up the 30-percent vacancy rate, according to Supreme Court Chief Justice Artemio Panganiban, who is holding regional dialogues with lawyers' groups to recruit more applicants.

- NATIONAL Power Corp. has offered to donate a number of idled generators to Saipan and Guam, which are currently experiencing power shortages.

Visiting Northern Mariana Gov. Benigno Fitial met Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla and top Napocor officials on Monday to discuss the planned donation.

Heard through the grapevine

THE INHERITANCE feud among the children of lawyer-accountant Carlos J. Valdes is worse than previously reported, with policemen trying to serve a warrant of arrest on the eldest son in his Forbes home, after the latter served an eviction notice on his complaining brother out of the family's Bataan farm.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

Gov't to allow private groups to import 30,000T of rice

THE GOVERNMENT WILL ALLOW LOcal farmers' groups and private firms to import 30,000 tons of rice for August-to-December arrival to complete this year's import requirement of 1.65 million tons, a senior official said on Tuesday.

The country imported 1.85 million tons of rice in 2005.

Gregorio Tan, administrator of the National Food Authority (NFA), said his firm had granted an import quota of 15,000 tons of premium, glutinous or fragrant rice to the state-owned Philippine International Trading Corp. (PITC).

PITC, in turn, has opened the importation to private firms.

The NFA, the sole government trading firm allowed to buy rice directly, will also open to local farmers' groups the importation of another 15,000 tons of rice from Australia, Tan said.

"The remaining 30,000 tons will be our last import for the year unless we are hit by a major typhoon," Tan said.

Officials said the damage wrought last week by Typhoon Bilis in rice-growing areas was limited.

"In some areas, ample water gave farmers an opportunity to plant," Tan sad.

Preliminary data from the Department of Agriculture showed Bilis—which means speed—had damaged P127.7 million worth of crops, nearly half of which was from vegetable farms.

The country has been importing rice to cover shortfalls in local harvests. *Reuters*

Planned lifting of QRs on rice opposed

Agri chief thinks plan may work against RP bid to have this trade mechanism extended

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULture is opposing a proposal seeking the lifting of quantitative restrictions (QRs) on the country's rice imports.

A proposal in the Cabinet to lift the QRs on rice imports during the lean months of July to September would not be acceptable at this time, as the country is in the final stages of negotiations for an extension of this trade mechanism under the World Trade Organization, the department said.

"It (removal of QR) would be disadvantageous for us at this point. It could send mix signals on what we really want. Other WTO member-countries may see this as a weak point," said Agriculture Secretary Domingo F. Panganiban.

PANGANIBAN

QRs come in the form of limits in the volume of products to be imported. They are imposed on rice to protect local farmers especially during harvest seasons, when local supply is abundant. Rice imports during these seasons may result in supply glut and drastic decline in local rice prices.

Panganiban also noted that implementing the said proposal might not be immediately possible as the conversion of the QRs into tariffs would require a change in legislation in Congress.

The Philippines has been seeking a seven-year extension in the imposition QRs on rice. The department said it was now in the final stages of convincing WTO member-countries to allow the country to impose QRs for seven more years.

The government has so far prevailed in its talks with other members of the World Trade Organization that opposed the country's bid.

India, the last country to oppose the Philippines' bid for the extension of the QR imposition, had also conceded with the Philippine negotiating team's terms in exchange for a possible rice import allocation, Panganiban said.

Philippine negotiators, he said, earlier made headway in convincing China, Argentina, Australia, Pakistan, Canada, Egypt, the United States and Thailand to agree to the Philippines' position.

"The next agenda would be to formally inform the WTO of this development and this may be done in two to three weeks," he said.

The lifting of QRs will allow the unlimited entry of rice into the country. The limits in import volume would be replaced by the imposition of tariffs.

In exchange for the retention of the QR, the Philippines may have to give country-specific quotas to other WTO members. Also, it may have to increase its minimum access volume for rice, which at present stands at 239,000 metric tons.

The National Food Authority earlier said the country might allow an increase in the MAV for rice to 350,000 metric tons.

According to the country's lead negotiator in the WTO, NFA Administrator Gregorio Tan Jr., the Philippines had committed to import some 98,000 metric tons from Thailand; 25,000 metric tons from China and 15,000 metric tons from Australia.

The Philippines wants to keep the limits on its rice imports until 2012.

ADB funding establishment of think tanks

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK YESTERday announced it had signed an agreement with the Asian Institute of Management to put up a think tank for public finance, one of up to six such centers that would be set up throughout the region.

Called knowledge hubs, the think tanks would be funded through a $990,000 technical assistance and are expected to disseminate new concepts in innovation, science, technology, management development and related fields in Asia and the Pacific.

In particular, the agreement was forged between ADB's Regional and Sustainable Development Department and AIM's Roberto F. de Ocampo Center for Public Finance and Regional Economic Cooperation.

AIM-RFO Center conducts research and studies, organizes conferences, roundtable talks, lecture series and distance learning symposia on a variety of public finance topics.

Bindu Lohani, director general of the ADB department, said the public finance knowledge hub would serve as a knowledge and information gateway on fiscal policy and practice, anticorruption, and privatization.

Lohani explained that AIM-RFO Center would function as a regional think tank in a number of important areas identified in ADB's Medium Term Strategy II as well as act as a hub for the collection, structuring and dissemination of knowledge from various resources.

Approved last December, the TA grant was meant to finance at least four and at most six knowledge hubs that would be established within two years.

According to ADB, there was a need for such hubs considering that while new knowledge and technologies were being developed successfully in different countries and regions, ADB's developing member countries were finding it difficult to make use of such knowledge for local needs.

The plan is for the hubs to act as centers for excellence on emerging development topics like clean development mechanism, use of compressed natural gas and hybrid technologies in the transport sector, renewable energy, environmental technology, information and communications technology, and management techniques.

The hubs would be linked with each other as well as with relevant national organizations, collaborate with existing knowledge networks in the Asia and Pacific region.

They would also be linked to international academic and research organizations so that they could adapt the latest international development concepts to regional or local needs and demands.

In June, ADB and India's The Energy Resources Institute signed a letter of intent to put up the first of the knowledge hubs.

ADB said other existing research networks that have expressed interest in hosting a knowledge hub included UN Environmental Program and AIT in Thailand for a think tank on reduce, reuse and recycle (3Rs), and Tsinghua University in China on one about climate change.

New antipoverty tack for firms proposed

By Daxim L. Lucas

AN INTERNATIONAL ANTIPOVERTY advocacy group is urging the local businesses to rethink their corporate social responsibility (CSR) programs to make them more responsive to the imbalances of a capitalist economy.

More importantly, the new paradigm—dubbed "the Economy of Communion"—may help individual companies achieve growth, while helping underprivileged members of the society help themselves out of poverty.

Thus said Movement for an Economy of Communion secretariat member Luigino Bruni, speaking before the local Focolare Movement, a faith-based organization whose members include representatives from the business, social and cultural sectors.

"The common mistake is to simply take from the rich and give to the poor,"

He pointed out that there have been three main attempts to redistribute capital in recent history, namely the introduction of the European welfare state, the US model of business philanthropy, and the experiment with Communist or Socialist governments.

"Know we know that these three experiments are not viable and sustainable," Bruni said.

Bruni—who is also a widely-published economics professor at the University of Milan—said these three attempts to bridge the wealth gap between the rich and the poor failed mainly because they lacked to key elements.

The first factor important for the success of a wealth redistribution program is the element one is the element of "reciprocity"—getting the recipients of aid involved in the process of lifting them out of poverty, rather than helping them through straight dole outs.

Bruni noted that aid recipients who were not given the chance to reciprocate the generosity of the donors often end up "hating" the latter, because the act of giving made them feel inferior.

To this end, the economics professor highlighted the importance of a company's role in job creation as an act of helping indigents lift themselves out of poverty.

"Work is very important because, through it, people can help themselves," he said, explaining the symbiotic relationship between a company that helps its employees get out of poverty, who in turn, help the company grow.

Bruni also said that the concept of "proximity" is critical to the success of any anti-poverty program since it dispels the feeling among the aid recipients that they are part of "the anonymous poor."

"Help coming from a neighbor is much more effective than help from a far-away institution," he said, in a critique of the US philanthropy model.

To this end, the Focolare Movement is advocating a slew of old and new business practices that are focused on helping corporations grow while addressing the needs of their communities' underprivileged class.

One such program is microfinancing, which is meant to give the "poorest of the poor" access to capital that they can use to put up businesses.

During the forum, entrepreneurs Francis and Tess Ganzon presented their work with Batangas-based Banco Kabayan, which specializes in microfinance lending to the so-called "unbankable" members of society.

The couple said that apart from being an avenue to help the underprivileged, microfinance also provided the bank a new avenue for making money in the wake of the 1997 East Asian financial crisis, which caused many financial institutions to fail.

Coupled with an emphasis on ethical business practices, the bank has survived several crises and has emerged a potent force for change in their local communities, the Ganzon couple said.

Lepanto sets 1-for-8 stock rights offering

From page B2

Lepanto also sees gold production growing with the reopening of the copper-gold mine in Mankayan.

It expects gold production of 65,000 ounces this year from 55,749 ounces last year.

Lepanto was incorporated in 1936 and until 1997 was operating a copper mine.

Lepanto shifted to gold production in the same year through its Victoria Project in Benguet. Lepanto operated a copper flotation plant from August 2000 to December 2001, when copper operations were suspended.

Lepanto sells its gold bullion production to Johnson Matthey and Heraeus Ltd (Hong Kong). Copper concentrates were sold through Trafigura Beheer and Centrotrade Minerals and Metals (metals trading companies), which are based in Switzerland and Canada, respectively.

Gov't borrowed ₱302B in 1st 6 months

From page B1

of Congress to pass the proposed national budget for 2006 before it went into recess last month. The government thus operates on the reenacted 2005 budget.

Of the P302.54-billion borrowings made in the first six months of the year, P125.12 billion were made up of foreign loans while P177.42 billion were in the form of local liabilities.

Foreign borrowings are undertaken either through the flotation of sovereign bonds or in the form of official development assistance from multilateral agencies and foreign governments. Domestic borrowings are made through the issuance of government securities in the local capital market.

The Department of Finance set the national government's borrowing program for 2006 at P522.64 billion mainly to help fund its expenditure requirements and repay maturing obligations.

But National Treasurer Omar Cruz said that should Congress no longer work on the enactment of the proposed 2006 national budget, then the government could cut down on its debt offerings in the second half to keep borrowings for the full year significantly less than what have been programmed.

Congress failed to pass the proposed P1.053-trillion 2006 budget before it went on recess last month due to a deadlock between the Lower House and the Senate. While the former wanted the proposal intact, the Senate wanted to eliminate several infrastructure-related project allocations and cut the budget down to only P1.027 trillion.

Should legislators no longer pass the proposed 2006 budget, then the national government would only be allowed to limit its expenditures for the full year to the 2005 spending levels. Under the 2005 budget, the government's spending limit was set at only P918 billion.

With expenditures being limited to last year's program, then there would be no reason for the government to borrow an amount based on the 2006 fiscal program.

Cruz said the Bureau of the Treasury, tasked with issuing government securities, said it was planning to cut down on the volume of treasury bills and bonds that it would issue in the second half.

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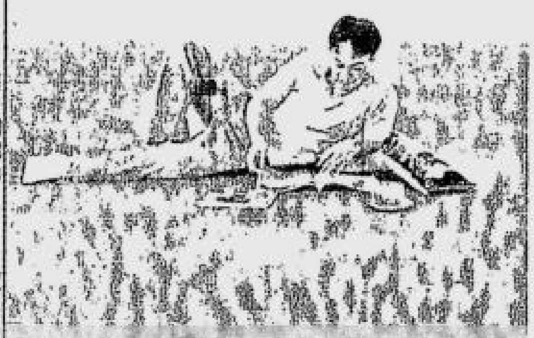

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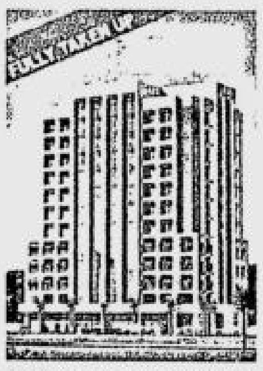

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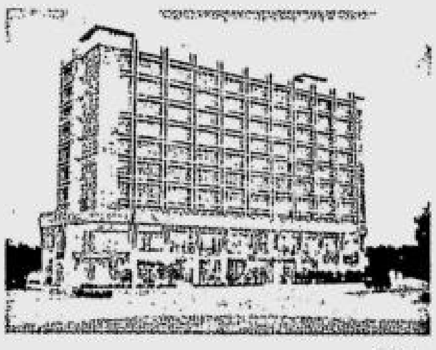

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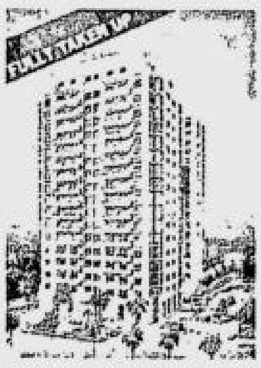

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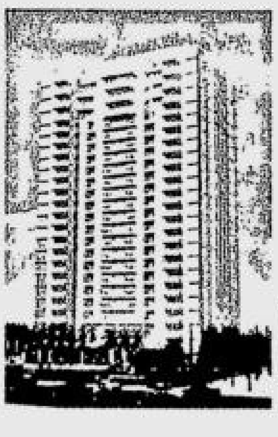

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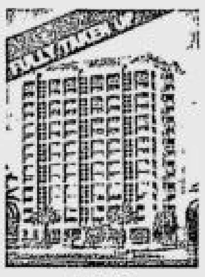

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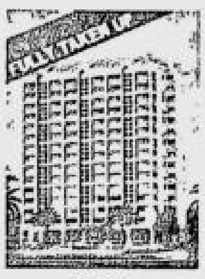

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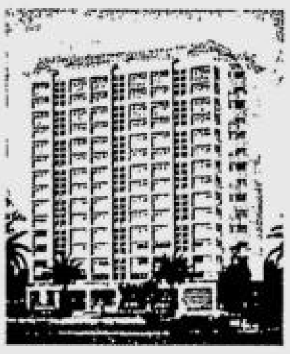

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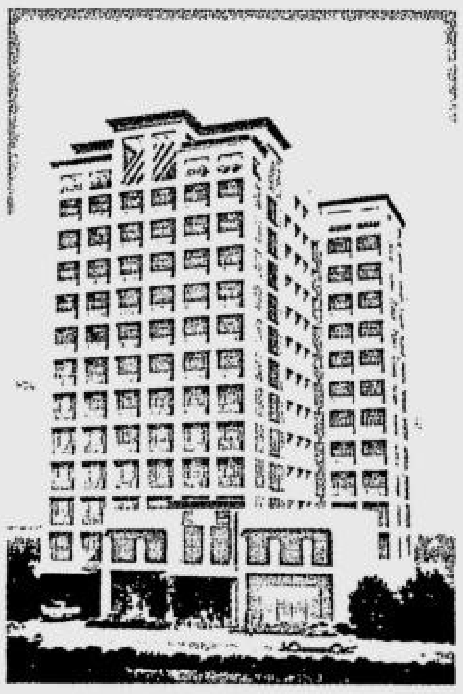

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Feng shui your car? Why not!

By Tessa R. Salazar

HOW ABOUT COMBINING an unlikely topic, let's say feng shui, with motoring? Well, why not!

Nicole Noles, whose day job is being an editor of the North Port Herald, a weekly community insert for the North Port Sun, dabbles in some pretty weird stuff during her spare time. Oh well, she only does some Swedish, Thai, and craniosacral massage, as well some Reiki and shamanic healing, tarot and feng shui consultations in southwest Florida. The usual stuff you go into after you get bored with your stamp collection. She has even put a corporation, Vitalichi Inc., to lump her extracurricular expertise into one organization.

Strangest advice

INQUIRER Motoring, fortunately, got hold of Noles in between her busy schedules, as well as INQUIRER Property *suki* California-based feng shui expert Roberto Teng Vicente. Could they share some words of wisdom for motorists?

Raymond Catchpole, a UK-based international feng shui expert, certainly had some. Try this: "Tie a blue ribbon to your rear-view mirror and sprinkle the interior with sea-salt." Now, what the heck does this do for the car, or for your driving aptitude? We read this piece of advice from Dan Gilbert's interview with the man at autoexpress.co.uk, and aptly, it has been labeled "the strangest driving advice of the year." We've been trying to get in touch with Catchpole, but he hasn't replied to our e-mails. He's probably answering 185,263 other e-mails asking what that does for their car and their driving.

So, while we wait for our turn for an explanation. Let's divert our attention to our two other experts. Vicente says his traditional feng shui does not necessarily focus on moving objects such as cars (or even slow-moving objects such as boats). What his advice is about lies on the "metaphysical" plane. And that makes it applicable on nearly all types of situations.

"Anything that moves, like dangling items inside the car, especially by the dashboard, creates a type of energy that could bother the driver and may result into dizziness or partially put the driver into a light trance," Vicente says. Translation: Don't hang your grandfather clock up front. Don't place those "nodding" dog and cat figurines (the ones with the loose, rocking heads) on the dash. They may seem cute at first, but they do get to your nerves in the end.

And get rid of the "bling-blings" in your line of sight. Vicente says multifaceted crystals hanging by the dashboard can be distracting, especially when sunlight strikes the crystal and refracts various colors to your eyes.

And reserve that New Age, Zen-style music for the spa. Vicente says people should never listen to meditation music while doing activities that require wakefulness, such as driving.

Car color

Are you about to buy a new car and can't make up your mind on what color to choose? Try going for one that matches your Mingua, or personal number based on your year of birth.

"Mingua 1 is a water element and its colors are dark blue and black. Mingua 2, 5 and 8 are earth elements and its colors are yellow and brown. Mingua 3 and 4 are wood elements and its colors are green. Mingua 6 and 7 are metal elements and its colors are white, gold, silver. Mingua 9 is a fire element and its color is red," he says.

Clutter

Vicente says clutter is not good anywhere. Noles agrees, and advises motorists to not bring the trash everywhere they go.

"It dampens your ch'i to drive around knee deep in junk and this likely symbolizes your habit of always bringing your problems with you wherever you go," she says.

Catchpole's report, cited in autoexpress.co.uk, also advises motorists to remove clutter from the car to "help chi energy flow."

Other Catchpole pieces of advice: Sing, clap your hands or play music to "clear your personal space" inside the car; keep the windows clean "to allow energy to flow in; and keep a bottle of water in the car—for the same reason as the blue ribbon—that water promotes a clear, flowing and thoughtful state of mind.

There, the blue ribbon has been demystified at last. Now all we have to wait for is his explanation about the sea salt. Noles agrees with the presence of water in your car. But she warns against eating in the car. "Food in the car can create a mess and attracts bugs, neither of which helps you maintain a calm environment," she explains. True, try eating *pansit* and swat off a pesky fly while you're driving.

Flies and pets are two altogether different animals, but Vicente discourages drivers from bringing both in the car, anyway. "It wouldn't be a good idea to bring pets while you're driving alone because it could cause distractions and make you lose your focus." Makes sense, unless the dog was driving and you're the one sticking your head out the window, lapping in the rushing air.

Cursed car

So you've just gotten your car repaired after an accident. What do you do immediately afterward? "Take it to your parish priest and have it blessed," advises Vicente. If you figure again in an accident, have yourself blessed by a driving instructor. You might be cursed by the "dumb and dangerous driver" demon.

But is there such a thing as a cursed car? If you ask Noles, it certainly is possible. "Within the practice of feng shui, if I knew a car had been a scene of a violent act, I would bless it, but not recommend that it be sold to anyone. I certainly would not buy it. Although blessing the car can remove much of the sha chi (negative energy) of the violent event, I would not take the chance of using it and absorbing any of the bad luck from the incident," she says.

Noles, a Starchild feng shui consultant, wrote "Feng Shui in the Car" several years ago. She took additional feng shui training in San Diego with the now-defunct Feng Shui Warehouse in May 2000.

Meanwhile, autoexpress.co.uk cited Catchpole's study as commissioned by insurers Aon Private Clients, and described it as "the first-ever to study the application of the ancient Chinese art to motoring.

Road rage

It further stated that "it looked for measures that, according to the principles of feng shui, improve the flow of energy in vehicles and help drivers alleviate the negative feelings which lead to road rage."

Speaking of road rage, Catchpole's report hints cars carry an inherent aggressiveness wherever they go. So how do you handle an "untamed" car? Don't park your car facing your home, as cars, according to Catchpole, are "predatory tigers" and when parked toward a house or office, they create a threat to the occupants of the building. Yup, especially when the driver forgets to pull up the handbrakes.

Gilbert says the Catchpole report examines some makes of cars, too, most memorably describing the Porsche Boxster as "a feminine ... unaggressive vehicle, an ideal drive for a happy and single architect." Perhaps not the most accurate description of the typical Porker petrolhead, Gilbert adds.

Most thoughtful Mercedes

IF YOU WERE ASKED TO DESCRIBE the top-of-the-line Mercedes-Benz, the S-Class, what words would you choose? Most prestigious? Most luxurious? Most impressive?

After spending a weekend recently driving the S 350, I would choose "most thoughtful." The unparalleled safety features and technological innovations of the new S-Class translate into maximum motoring comfort that contributes to driver fitness, reduces the stress and fatigue of traveling and enhances the well-being of all the car's occupants. It is almost as if this car were endowed with a human intelligence that thoughtfully anticipates whatever you need to make your life easier while driving.

For example, when you get into the 12-way adjustable driver's seat, it adjusts its height and longitudinal position according to the previous setting you chose. When you switch off the engine, the seat slides backward to facilitate your egress. When you get in and out of the car, the ambient lighting in the side mirrors provides convenient guiding light especially in the evening.

Quietly

After getting out of the S 350, when you press the "lock" button on the key fob the side mirrors fold in automatically and when you press the "unlock," they fold out. The automatic closing aid pulls the doors shut softly and quietly even if you have pushed them in too gently. You can close the trunk lid by remote control. Electric roller blinds for the rear-side windows and rear windshield ensure your passengers' privacy. The two-stage rain sensor activates windshield wipers without your having to lift a finger.

When you shift into reverse, the side mirrors dip and the reversing camera shows the area behind on the display monitor with colored directional lines to guide you in backing up. The dipping side mirrors and reverse camera are supplemented by Parktronic sensors fore and aft.

While these are some of the convenient features that manifest the S 350's "thoughtfulness," they are minor compared to its other technological innovations that guarantee safety and comfort. Mercedes-Benz engines are renowned for their power, quietness and smoothness and you get to appreciate these qualities in the S 350's 272-hp, 3.5-liter V6, dual-ignition engine that sprints from 0 to 100 km per hour in 7.3 seconds but consumes only 10.1 to 10.3 liters of gasoline per 100 km in combined city and highway driving. The engine is mated to 7G-Tronic, the world's first seven-speed automatic transmission, with speed-sensitive power steering, Direct Control gearshift buttons and cruise control.

ON THE ROAD

Aida Sevilla-Mendoza

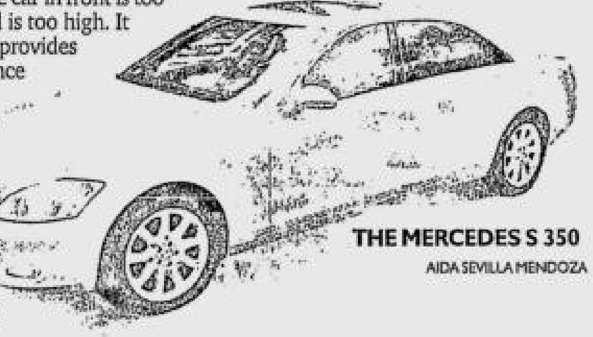
Accident preventive

The radar-based Brake Assist Plus (BAS Plus) system sounds a warning if the gap between the S 350 and the car in front is too small or the closing speed is too high. It calculates and instantly provides the brake servo assistance required to prevent a rear-end collision.

Combined with the BAS Plus is the Pre-Safe occupant protection system that tensions the front seat belts, inflates air cushions in the seats to envelope/support the driver and passengers and closes the sliding sunroof automatically when it recognizes an emergency situation. Eight airbags and ABS with Brake Assist, of course, are standard together with disc brakes all around and ESP (Electronic Stability Control) that applies the brakes individually at one or more of the wheels and reduces engine speed, if necessary, when the car is in danger of oversteer or understeer on a winding road. The Adaptive Brake with hold function and hill start assist makes driving off and on gradients and in city traffic easier.

Air suspension

No doubt a major contributor to the S 350's ride quality is the Airmatic air suspension system that, together with the Adaptive Damping System (ADS), continuously controls the shock absorber characteristics, taking road conditions, driving style and vehicle load into account. With the "S/C/M" key in the center console, you can adjust the suspension, vehicle level and transmission mode from "comfortable" to "sporty" to improve handling, aerodynamics and fuel consumption.



THE MERCEDES S 350
AIDA SEVILLA MENDOZA

In conjunction with bi-xenon headlights that have a cornering light function and headlamp cleaning system, Night View Assist allows you to see obstacles on the road even when visibility is impaired by headlights of oncoming traffic. The road, illuminated by infrared camera, is projected as a gray-scale image on the 8-inch multifunction display in the instrument cluster. Night View Assist reduces night driving stress and allows you to reach your destination more relaxed.

Display

The multifunction display is part of the Comand (Cockpit Management and Data) System that integrates operation of the radio, CD/DVD player, telephone and a port for computer memory cards.

The Comand System as well as the luxurious fine wood, chrome trim and rich leather composing the roomy cabin with impeccable craftsmanship immediately convey a feeling of well-being and security once you enter the S 350. These interior attributes, plus the high static torsional rigidity of the S 350's body shell and the technological innovations already described, blend beautifully to offer you a heavenly motoring experience. If only you and I can afford this thoughtful, award-wining luxury car! But the S 350 is worth every peso of its P8.9 million price tag ... if you have the cash.

* * *

TODAY'S BUMPER STICKER: A politician should do two terms: one in office and one in jail.

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Pressed-down prices; US bestsellers

COSTS OF ALMOST EVERYTHING have gone virtually sky-high. But at Mitsubishi Motors Philippines, the call of the times is pressed-down prices.

Take the case of the new Lancer. The newly unleashed Lancer 1.6 GL MT comes at only P683,000. That's cheap, compared with its chief rivals.

Its three siblings are also bargain buys—Lancer 1.6 GLS CVT P768,000, Lancer 1.6 MX CVT P858,00 and Lancer 2.0 GT P958,000.

Froy Dytianquin, Mitsubishi Motors' AVP for marketing services, said, "I'm sure the new Lancer GT will meet the expectation of those who are looking for a sporty compact sedan. We are also equally pleased with the upgraded Lancer 1.6 model as its value-for-money proposition has been further enhanced."

A friend who's been a long-time Mitsubishi loyalist tells me of excellent service he gets from the Mitsubishi dealership in Libis each time he brings his Lancer there for servicing. He makes special mention of Boyet Talagtag, "who is highly recommended by Mr. Arlan Reyes of Mitsubishi Motors as Mr. Efficient of Mitsubishi Libis."

Oh well, glad to know Mitsubishi takes to heart the timeless policy that its dealers "take care of customers at all times."

* * *

Among the most popular Japanese models sold in the United States in the first half of 2006 ending June are Honda and Toyota vehicles (source: Autodata).

FULL TANK

Al Mendoza

The Ford F-Series pickup was tops with 400,000 sold, followed by Chevrolet Silverado pickup 317,000.

The Toyota Camry was 3rd with 219,000, Toyota Corolla/Matrix (Altis here) 4th 197,000, Dodge Ram pickup 5th 183,000, Honda Accord 6th 178,000, Honda Civic 7th 165,000, and Chevrolet Impala, Dodge Caravan and Chevrolet Cobalt finishing 8th, 9th and 10th.

However, GM suffered a 25.7 percent loss in sales from a year earlier as well as Ford (7 percent loss) and Chrysler (15.5 percent).

Toyota scored the biggest gain with 14.4 percent increase in sales, followed by Mazda 7.5 percent, Hyundai and BMW 3.4 percent each and Kia 1.3 percent.

* * *

More often than not, traffic signs in the metropolis are placed in spots where public utility vehicle (PUV) drivers are forced, prone if you wish, to violate. They don't violate, they earn less, if not nothing.

Take, for example, the no loading/unloading signs.

Almost always, you see them in places where commuters habitually embark/disembark.

You place the signs farther from where the commuters are used to hailing their rides and that's inconveniencing the commuters.

So, why place the signs at all at places that would inconvenience PUV drivers but not commuters?

Simple. Said traffic signs are tools for some unscrupulous traffic enforcers to augment their income.

I'm sure you see many PUV drivers not getting apprehended while ignoring said traffic signs.

Simple. Violators contribute every day to a common fund for law enforcers to not enforce the very law they are sworn to enforce.

You want corruption in motion, you need not go to Malacañang. You see it on Edsa every day, and in such traffic signs like no loading/unloading.

I know. A dear PUV driver-friend of mine does the twin crimes (disobey traffic signs and pay "tong") every day.

"I have to, or my family would go hungry," he says.

Are commuters not guilty as well when they embark/disembark on no loading/unloading zones?

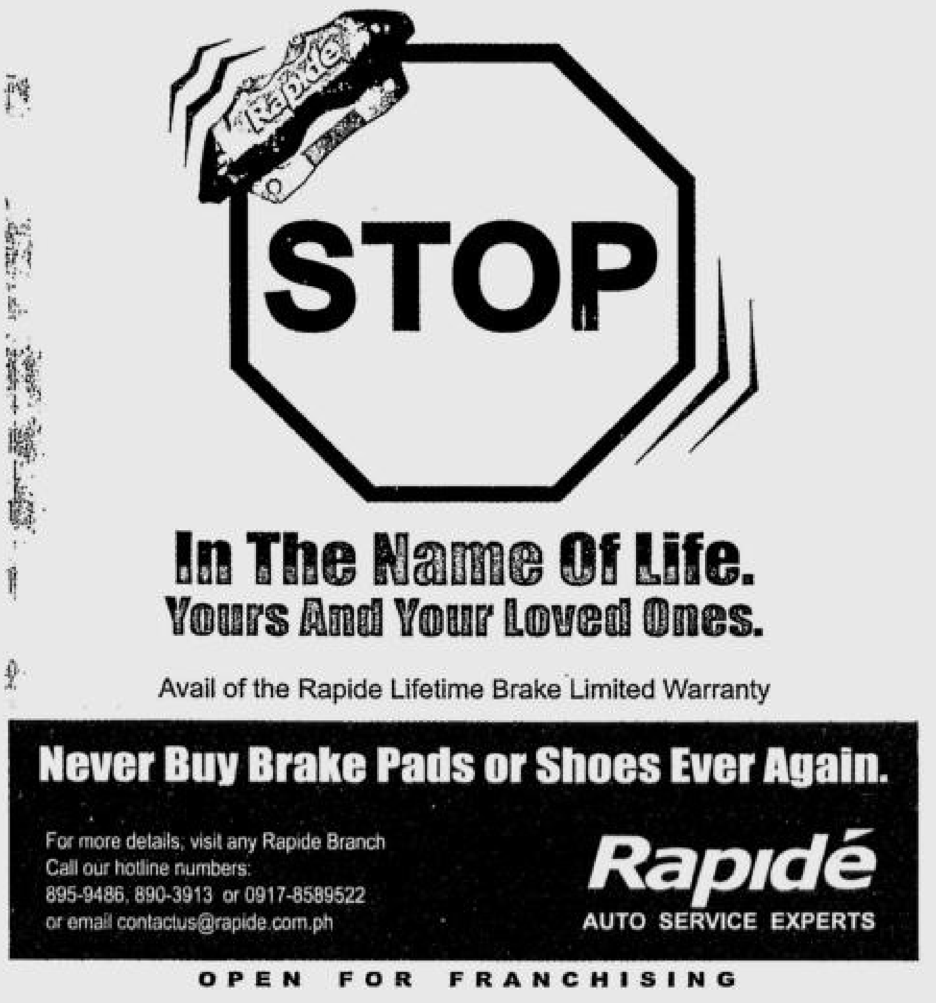
Perhaps, Mr. Bayani Fernando can enlighten us on this.

* * *

QUOTE ME. Too much braking is a waste of fuel.

* * *

Send comments to menju@pldtdsl.net



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Norkis readies compact car for RP market

By Charles E. Buban

INCLUDED IN THE CARAvan that toured the country for the final leg of the six-nation Yamaha Pan-Asean Touring are several compact cars that its maker, Porta Coeli Industrial Corp., a subsidiary of Norkis Group of Companies that markets the Yamaha brand in the Philippines, hopes to attract some attention.

"The Maverick, as we have named this compact vehicle, is another alternative for those looking for a very affordable yet dependable set of wheels," explained Buen Jose Delfin, group managing head of PCIC that is in charge for manufacturing and marketing four-wheeled vehicles for the Norkis Group.

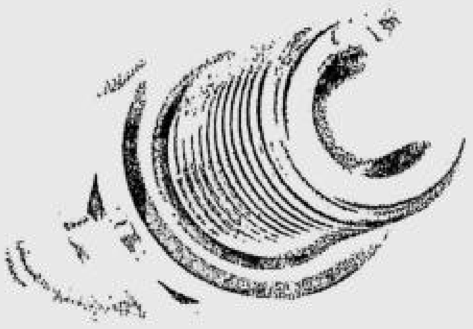
Norkis Group considers the Maverick, a premium compact model, thanks to its one-liter, four cylinder, double overhead cam (Nissan) gasoline engine (in comparison to PCIC's subcompact models that use either a 550cc or 660cc engines).

In Cebu, the Maverick is priced at P255,000 (three-door variant) and P260,000 (five-door)—figures which may vary once these variants are sold in Metro Manila.

Delfin explained that PCIC is slowly introducing the model outside Cebu and in Metro Manila saying they need to build interest for the vehicle model first.

The Maverick is also a product of 5Rs, short for reinvention, reengineering, reconditioning, rebuilding and recycling that the Norkis Group has popularized.

The 5Rs simply means that PCIC transforms used engines and components imported from Japan into almost new vehicles. "As a result, the Maverick, just like the other variants we have should be regarded as almost brand-new," Delfin said.



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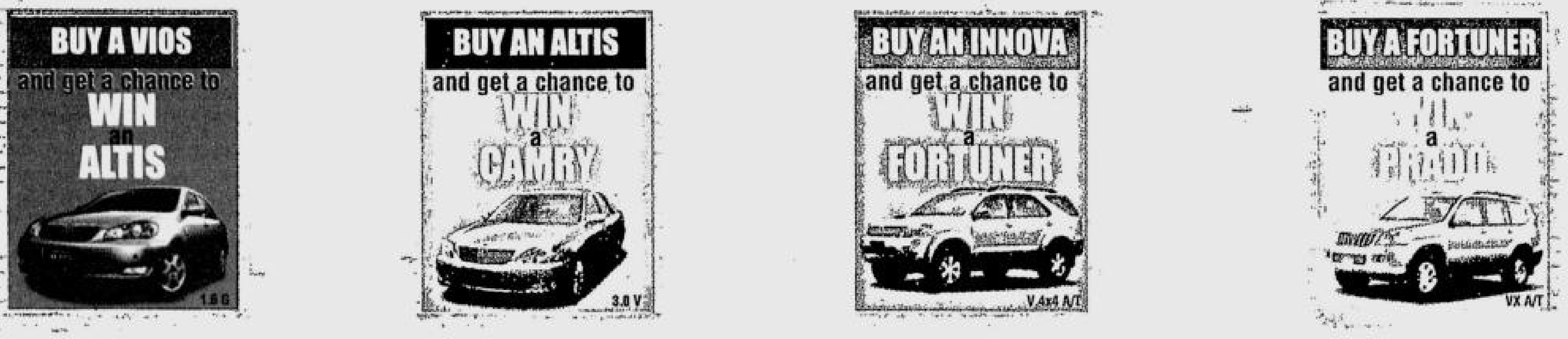
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Samsung creates new waves in LCD TV

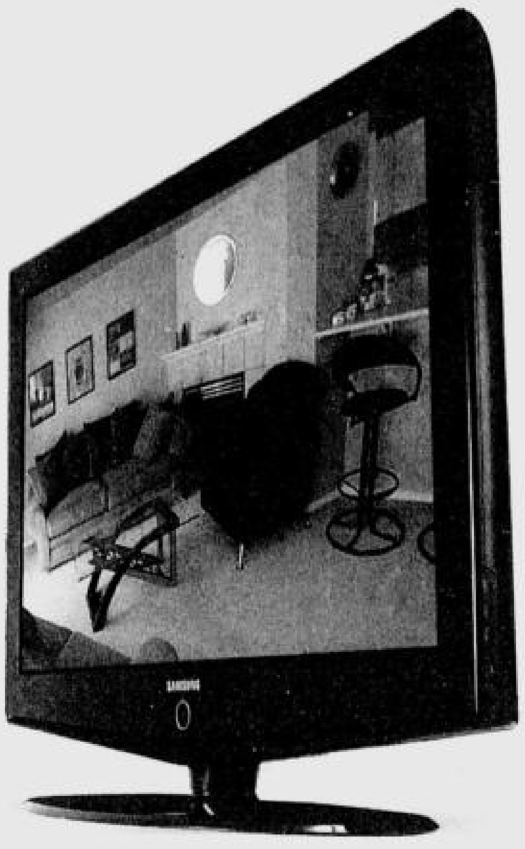
SAMSUNG'S AMBITIOUS LCD TV BRAND BORDEAUX SMASHED records, selling more than 1 million over three weeks. It set a remarkable record: the largest sale performance during the shortest time for one item, so it is successfully improving its brand image-about 2 million units of this hottest item have been sold since its rollout. Samsung has optimistic views regarding sales of Bordeaux LCD TV, and looks like the product's sale performance will rise continuously through the end of this year.

Locally, Samsung LCD TV also leads. This is proven in the last three months of sales based on a local consumer association and as reported by GFK Asia. Samsung plans to continue to dominate the market through its experiential marketing programs "Dare to Compare" Mall Tour and "Trade in Trade up" promotions. These programs heightened the viewing experience of the Filipinos.

'Imagine' campaign

Samsung's new marketing campaign "imagine" also plays an important role in elevating Samsung's brand position and in building stronger emotional relationships with its customers; positioning Samsung as the preferred, premium brand as in the case of prestige LCD TVs. Samsung LCD TVs in the recent World Cup mania in the local hotels is a clear manifestation of a preferred brand. High-end cinemas also display Samsung LCD TVs, forging a strong alliance with the man of steel "Superman Returns."

Samsung LCD TV has innovative and functional design. The LCD TV Bordeaux serves an elegant interior decorative object that offers the very best and latest in high-fidelity picture and sound.



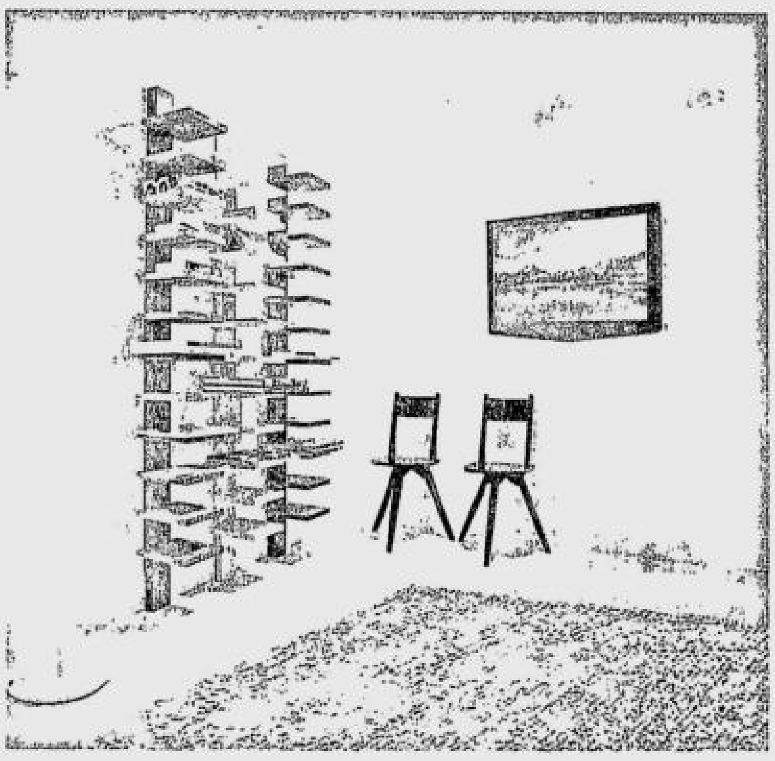
The front surface of the LCD TV is perfectly clean and sophisticated because all control buttons have been moved to the sides. Additionally, the world's first hidden bar type speakers are invisibly installed in the lower front area. These speakers are not only unobtrusive, but they also faithfully reproduce the original sound. Samsung's new LCD TV also boasts a stunning design with a high gloss coating on the front, back and stand.

In addition, the Samsung LCD TV provides an undistorted image from virtually every viewing angle, while boasting decreased thickness and reduced power consumption. Samsung's proprietary contrast enhancement technology offers dramatically improved contrast ratio and color expression that are at higher than any competitor's LCD TV is capable of achieving. It offers a crisp image with a high dynamic contrast ratio, and an amazing color palette featuring 12.8 billion colors.

Ingenious swivel stand

Samsung's new LCD TV's ingenious swivel stand affords consumers the ultimate flexibility in positioning the TV in their house. The world's first hidden bar type speakers reproduce vivid, vibrant sound that is as close to the original as possible, all while eliminating unsightly speaker grills. These and other outstanding features are the result of years of effort undertaken by a design team composed of modern artisans and state-of-the-art technologists of the new generation of consumers who value both form and function.

Price and video quality play important criteria in selecting television sets in the past. A sensitive design that expresses the consumer's lifestyle now become a decisive factor for buyers and Samsung LCD TV has it.



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A healthier lifestyle with brown rice tea

BROWN RICE IS 10 TIMES more nutritious than white rice. Brown rice or "unpolished rice" is actually white rice before the milling process and still retains its outer skin and embryo. Outer skin has high fiber content while the embryo is rich in vitamins, minerals and amino acids. Brown rice is difficult to cook and eat but it is more nutritious than white rice, which is left with only the carbohydrate. Brown rice is also known to be rich in nutrients such as Vitamin B complex and fiber.

After many years of research, Highlanders Singapore has employed advanced technologies to develop the brown rice nutri-porridge, which is delicious and quick to cook that can be ready to serve in just 15 minutes.

Highlanders Brown Rice Tea was inspired by a cherished traditional health beverage that was developed using an ancient Tibetan recipe. Today, there are thousands of written testimonials from customers around the world who have consumed this tea and the effect has been amazing. It not only helps relieve tension, allowing you to concentrate on your work, but also helps you to relax your body and induce sleep when you need to rest. Moreover, it effectively reduces the frequency of night urination, which is commonly found in children and adults.

Manufactured in Singapore in accordance with International Quality Standard, Highlanders Brown Rice Tea is an all-natural health product that invigorates one's bodily defenses against diseases. It uses 100-percent natural ingredients from premium grade unpolished brown rice.

Highlanders Brown Rice Tea is exclusively distributed by Team Asia Corp. For more information, call 726-1328, 726-1358, or 726-0848; fax: 723-2782; or log on to www.teamasiacorporation.com or e-mail dbiphils@pldtdsl.net. Call now and enjoy a 10-percent discount for the first 100 callers.

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BROWN RICE TEA
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HIGHLY NUTRITIOUS AND HELPS IN SLEEPING
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CHAVIT'S ATTIRE OF SUCCESS

Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis 'Chavit' Singson takes delight in wearing the famous Celebrity Collection, a men's wear brand of clothing that dominates the market of young professionals and executives for over 20 years now. A pioneer in the men's wear business, Celebrity Collection is particular about giving comfort to customers by making its products trendy, soft and cool, yet still highlighting ambition, power, success, authority, and glamour that leaves a lasting impression for the wearer. Celebrity Collection products are made of materials imported from Japan, Hong Kong, and Singapore. It is made of 100% pure cotton, polyester, and is available in knitted, plain, and printed polo shirts. Celebrity Collection is available at SM Megamall and SM City Department Stores, Ever Gotesco, Robinsons, and other provincial outlets nationwide.

ALAI INTRODUCES PESO AND DOLLAR PROTECT 300

Ayala Life Assurance Inc (Alai), a subsidiary of the Bank of the Philippine Islands (BPI), which caters to the insurance needs of the bank's clients, introduced its latest product, the Peso and Dollar Protect 300, in a talk show-inspired event held July 18 at Merk's Bar Bistro in Greenbelt 3, Makati City. The Dollar and Peso Protect 300 is a single-pay, savings and protection program, which provides maturity benefits at the end of 5 or 10 years. It offers 300% protection for you and your family. It's a no-frills savings and protection plan that guarantees your beneficiaries insurance benefits three times your maturity benefit. No other plan in the market offers this much protection and security. To officially launch the product, top executives of Alai and BPI opened umbrellas, which signified protection and security from rains of risks. The minds behind Protect 300 include (from left) Anthony Parungao, BPI vice president and Alai marketing director; Cesar Tejada, president of BPI Bancassurance Inc (BBI); Imelda Trillo, BPI senior vice president; Emil de Quiros, Alai president and BPI executive vice president; and Herbert Tuason, BBI sales director. For more information on Peso and Dollar Protect 300, call your BPI branch manager or the Protect 300 hotline at 753-P300 (753-7300).

CMC KIDNEY TRANSPLANT CENTER OPENING

The Capitol Medical Center Kidney Transplant Center and Life Gift Kidney Foundation Office were inaugurated recently during the celebration of CMC's 36th anniversary. Shown during the blessing were (from left) Dr. Angel Joaquin M. Amante, section head, transplant surgery, Dr. Thelma N. Clemente, president and CEO, UAE Ambassador Mohamed Ebrahim Al Jowaid, UAE Consul Mahmoud T. Badawi, Carmina C. Desales, MHA, VP/COO, and Ret. Gen. Edgardo Aglipay, president, Philippine Retirement Authority. CMC, being a fully integrated world-class health institution, is the first local private hospital to offer such procedures. CMC had its first kidney transplant in November 1970. The newly opened KTC can accommodate 15 patients with varying stages of renal disease and will be handled by competent CMC medical staff.

Jewelry sale at Festival Supermall

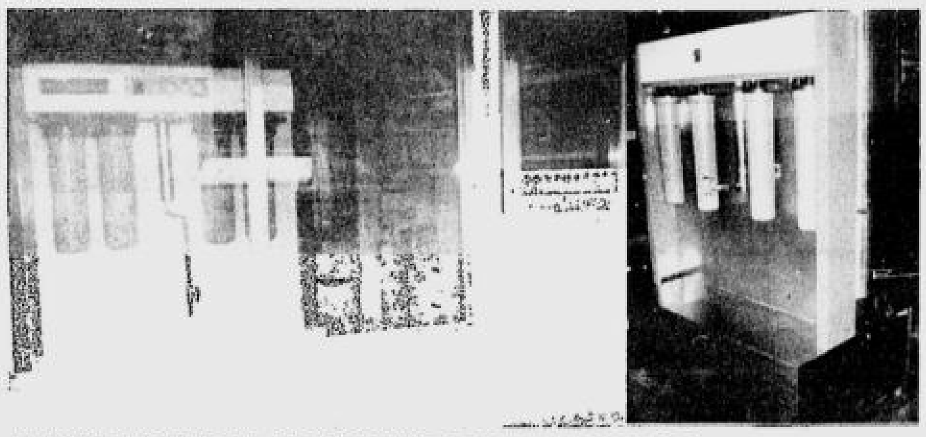
THE "GOLD RUSH" IS ON AT THE FEStival Supermall in Muntinlupa City, where this year's biggest assembly of precious gems and stunning jewelry is on an exciting two-week sale.

Dubbed "Shimmer", this glittering fair is ongoing until July 30, and feature an exhibit and a mall-wide jewelry sale.

The jewelry photo exhibit is at Festival Supermall's 2nd level main entrance, 3rd level Chef's Avenue, and 2nd level promenade entrance.

The photo exhibit is being held simultaneously with the Jewelry Selling Exhibit at the Carousel Court and the Mall-wide Jewelry Sale until July 30.

Festival Supermall is located at the Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang, Muntinlupa City. Call 850-3514 for inquiries.



AFFORDABLE, PORTABLE WATER STATION BUSINESS

THE ELECTROMEX UHP-500 water refilling station equipment produces 3,000 gallons a day of high-purity drinking water that passes DOH standards-for just P150,000. This 4-foot by 3-foot by 6-foot transportable equipment comes complete with tanks, filters, pumps, carbon, ultraviolet germicidal lamp and the industrial grade heavy-duty Ozone generator that kills germs and removes the lead, manganese and mercury 100 percent. The Electromex UHP-500 is more superior than the wasteful and more expensive reverse osmosis system, which throws out seven out of 10 gallons of backwash water. The UHP-500, on the other hand, is zero-waste and costs only 30 centavos per gallon, giving you an ROI in less than six months. The UHP-500 is fully assembled and there is no need to drill, cement, or destroy anything. Its plug-and-play, worry-free maintenance system is the same as what is used in Europe, Japan and the United States. For more details, call 531-6782 or 535-9069, or log on to www.electromexinc.com.

UP High batch 81 silver year

ARMAND, BIRDIE, PERSEUS, WHERE ARE YOU? YSSA AND RENEE ARE LOOKING FOR YOU. The UPCC High School Batch 1981 will be celebrating its 25th anniversary with a grand homecoming reunion this July 21 to 23. The three-day celebration will start with a formal Homing Dinner at the grand convention center on July 21 at 6 p.m. The High School '81 batch reunion continues over the weekend at the Costabella Tropical Resort Hotel. Many members of UP High '81 from Manila, Cebu, and the United States have confirmed their participation. All batch mates are invited to join this long-awaited reunion. For more information, call Annabelle at UPCC 233-9601 or Jobel at 0917-6281081, or log on to www.upalumnicebu.org for more updates.

SE Asian stocks up; gold, base metals recover

East Asia economy seen to grow to 7.5%; ADB warns China about overheating

A WORKER sweeps a sidewalk in front of a huge dollar sign on the wall of a construction site in Beijing. A year ago this Friday, Beijing revalued its currency, the yuan, by 2.1 percent and then loosened its decade-long link to the US dollar. Since then, the yuan has been allowed to rise a mere 1.4 percent against the dollar—less than some currencies move in a day. AP

HONG KONG—DEVELOPING EAST Asian economies should grow an average 7.5 percent this year, the Asian Development Bank yesterday said, but warned China to rein in its overheating economy.

The Manila-based bank also urged South Korea to keep close watch on corporate governance and expressed concern about political uncertainty and high public spending in Taiwan.

Masahiro Kawai, head of the bank's Office of Regional Economic Integration, said that while East Asia's overall economic outlook is positive, its biggest engine, China, needs to restrain its robust growth.

"A high growth rate is good for the rest of the Asian economies, but it's in the best interest of everybody to see China's sustained, stable growth rates, and the current growth rates are a bit higher than sustainable," he said.

Yesterday, China announced its economy grew a stunning 11.3 percent in the second quarter from a year ago.

When told about the new growth figures, Kawai exclaimed: "Oh, wow."

In Beijing, Zheng Jingping, spokesman for China's National Statistics Bureau, said the country can sustain "fast and stable growth" but must control a construction boom and rapid credit growth to prevent inflation, which so far hasn't emerged as a problem.

In the first half, inflation rose just 1.3 percent, according to figures released in Beijing.

Kawai also said China should scale back its pace of foreign currency reserves, which is poised to surpass $1 trillion this year.

East Asia as a whole has benefited from the broad economic expansion in major industrial countries and the rebound of the global technology industry, the ADB said.

It projected that as a region East Asia will expand an average of 7.5 percent this year, but that growth will slow to 6.9 percent in 2007 due to receding growth in the U.S., Japan and China. *AP*

Oil holds above $75 a barrel on concerns over escalating violence in Middle East

SINGAPORE—SOUTHEAST ASIAN STOCKS yesterday rose, recovering from the previous day's declines, while China-related stocks led gains in Singapore after the Chinese government announced strong economic data.

Also, the prices of gold, oil and base metals steadied, after falling sharply on Monday on profit-taking spurred by last week's gains on escalating conflict between Israel and Hezbollah.

Japan's Nikkei stock average dropped 2.75 percent on Tuesday while gold recovered some lost ground as investors sought havens after violence between Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah guerillas raged for a seventh day.

Stocks in Europe are seen mixed after US stock indexes ended flat on Monday. Spread betters in London expect Britain's FTSE 100, France's CAC 40 and Germany's DAX indexes to open between 14 points lower to 7 points higher.

Investors in Japan got their first chance to react to escalating violence in the Middle East as the country's financial markets reopened after a three-day weekend.

The Nikkei posted its biggest percentage fall in a month to close at 14,437.24, led by a 5 percent drop in shares of Fast Retailing and 6.3 percent plunge in telecoms and Internet firm Softbank Corp.

"There is a possibility that Japanese corporations, as well as the Japanese economy, will not be able to cope with higher oil prices, which basically reflect the conflict in the Middle East," said Masaaki Higashida, a deputy general manager in the investment information and services department at Nomura Securities Co. Ltd.

By mid-session, Singapore's Straits Times Index had risen 1.25 percent. Malaysian shares rose 0.86 percent, Indonesian stocks climbed 0.53 percent, and the Thai index gained 0.51 percent by 0507 GMT.

China's annual growth accelerated to 11.3 percent in the second quarter, the government yesterday said, fueled by booming investment and industrial output in the world's fourth-largest economy.

The strong growth led economists to predict further tightening measures.

Gold prices were volatile, slipping more than 1 percent before bargain hunters jumped in to take advantage of declines from their highest level in two months.

Spot gold yesterday hit the day's low of $641.60 an ounce before rebounding to $653.25. By 0635 GMT, it was at $651.00/652.50, higher than $650.30/651.80 in late New York trade.

Bullion rose to as high as $676 an ounce on Monday, but later fell back as investors locked in profits, while a firmer dollar also triggered selling.

Oil yesterday held above $75 a barrel, supported by accelerating economic expansion in number-two oil consumer China and concerns about escalating Middle East violence.

US light sweet crude for August delivery rose 15 cents to $75.74 a barrel by 0634 GMT, after Monday's 2.25 percent slide.

Brent crude for September gained 33 cents to $76.25 a barrel.

Oil prices are nearly $3 below last Friday's record-high of $78.40 after dealers took some relief that mounting violence between Israel and Hezbollah had not yet spread to neighboring oil-rich countries.

"There is the danger that the Middle East situation could spin out of control, but there is also a good chance that things will settle down," said Tony Nunan, a risk manager at Mitsubishi Corp. in Tokyo.

Copper for delivery in three months on the London Metal Exchange held steady at $7,740 a ton by 0710 GMT, against the close of $7,750 on Monday, when it tumbled as much as 5 percent on news that a six-week strike at the Cananea mine in Mexico had ended.

Nickel, which touched a new peak on Monday at $26,850 due to extremely tight global stocks, was also steady at $25,600/$25,900, up from the close of $25,700. *Reuters*

US Treasuries little changed, data awaited

TOKYO—UNITED STATES TREASURY prices yesterday were little changed in Asia as traders awaited upcoming data and congressional testimony from Federal Reserve chair Ben Bernanke for clues on how much longer US interest rates will rise.

Government debt prices paused after taking a knock on Monday from surprisingly strong industrial production figures that suggested the Fed may continue raising rates at its next meeting in August.

Still, the market received some support from concerns over escalating tensions in the Middle East that prompted investors to flee riskier investments such as stocks in favor of the relative safety of treasuries.

Asian investors were sitting tight before data on June consumer prices due today for more signs of whether US rates will remain on their two-year tightening cycle and rise above the current 5.25 percent.

Dealers said they also expected congressional testimony from Bernanke on monetary policy to offer some clues into whether the Fed will tighten credit next month.

"The market is being fairly cautious before the CPI data and Bernanke's testimony," said a dealer at a Japanese trust bank.

Before that, the market is looking to June core producer prices for signs of whether the effects of inflation are likely to trickle down to consumers from producers.

Forecasts are for a 0.2 percent month-on-month rise in core prices, which strip out volatile food and energy costs, following a 0.3 percent rise in May. A higher-than-expected figure could bolster the argument for more tightening, pushing Treasury prices down.

The yield on the benchmark 10-year Treasury was at 5.07 percent, largely unchanged from levels in New York on Monday. The 10-year yield has been inching away from 5.25 percent touched late last month, its highest level since mid-2002.

The two-year yield was unchanged at 5.12 percent.

Traders said slight selling in eurodollar futures was adding some downward pressure on cash bonds earlier in the Asian session, but overall trading was subdued.

June core CPI is expected to rise 0.2 percent from the previous month, according to a Reuters poll.

Traders said Bernanke's speech would also give a clearer view into whether the Fed is nearing the end of its credit-tightening cycle.

"If Bernanke's speech is similar to the Fed's last post-meeting statement, it could be a signal that inflation risks may be waning," said the Japanese trust bank dealer. *Reuters*

Microsoft, Xen agree to run Windows, Linux side-by-side

SAN FRANCISCO—MICROSOFT Corp. on Monday said it is teaming up with Linux supplier XenSource to allow computers to run the upcoming version of Microsoft's Windows server operating system on computers that are simultaneously running Linux software.

In the latest sign that it is dropping its resistance to Linux, Microsoft of Redmond, Washington is teaming up with Palo Alto, California-based XenSource to compete with VMware, now the biggest supplier of so-called "virtualization" software.

VMware, also based in Palo Alto, is a unit of EMC Corp., and helped pioneer the market in which computers can be used to simultaneously run multiple operating systems.

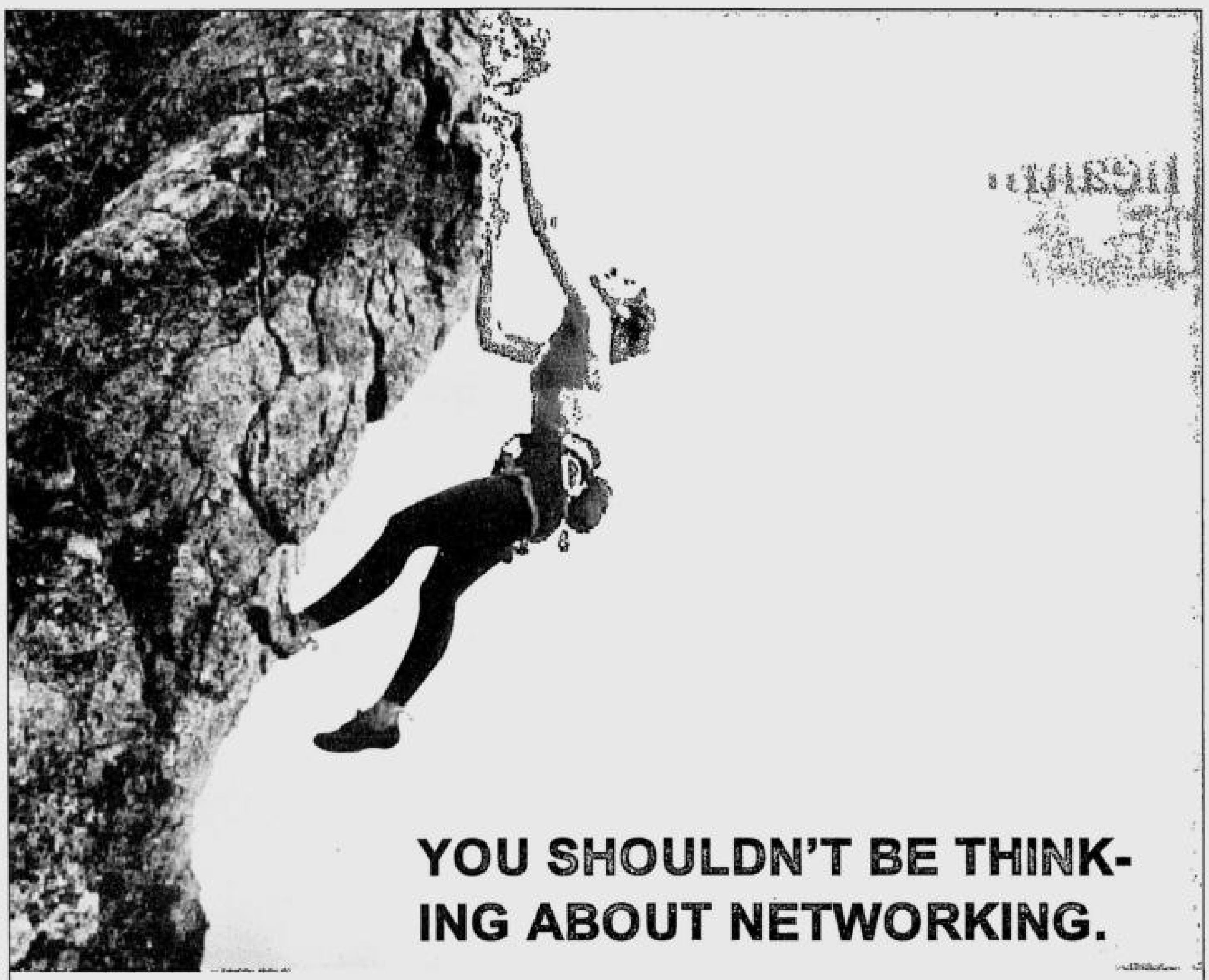
Virtualization software functions at a more basic level than operating systems such as Windows or Linux to allow fundamentally different software programs to run on the same microchip.

This allows more tasks to be run on each computer, cutting overall hardware costs for businesses.

Microsoft and XenSource said in a joint statement that they will cooperate on the development of technology that makes their respective "virtualization" software programs work side-by-side on the same computer.

As a result of the collaboration, the next version of Windows Server, code-named "Longhorn," will provide customers with a virtualization system that promises to help run both Windows and Linux on the same machine more cost-effectively.

Microsoft said it expects to conduct a public trial of Windows Server virtualization by the end of this year and to release a commercial version of the software within 180 days of the date when Windows Server "Longhorn" is released. *Reuters*



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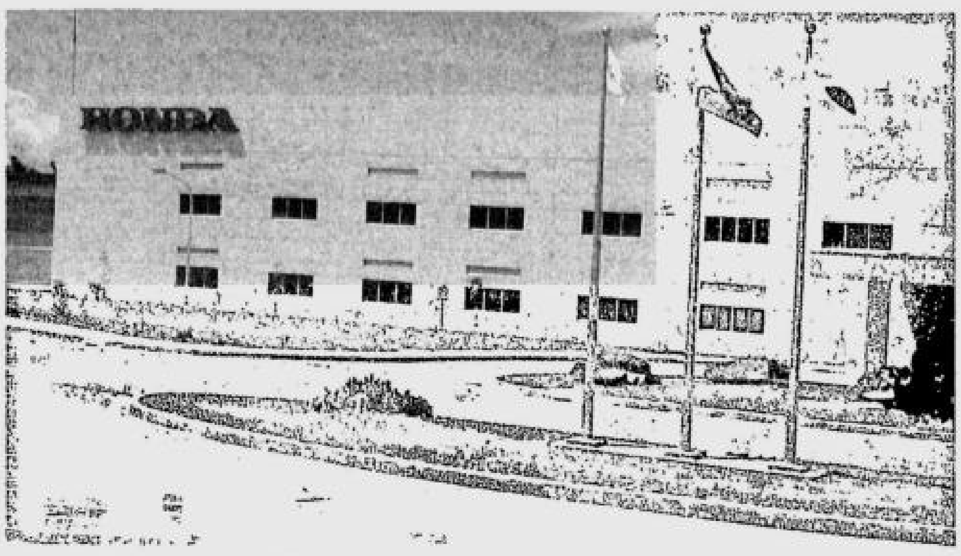
HONDA

Honda Philippines Inc. will inaugurate today its new P1.8-billion motorcycle manufacturing facility at the First Philippine Industrial Park (FPIP) in Tanauan City, Batangas with no less than President Arroyo as its guest of honor.



Honda Philippines 1.8 billion motorcycle manufacturing facility at the First Philippines Industrial Park (FPIP) in Tanauan City, Batangas.

Honda Philippines, Inc.

inaugurates new motorcycle facility

The 20-hectare facility is expected to boost the company's production output from 300,000 to 500,000 motorcycle per year.

KAZUHIKO IKEZOE
President and General Manager

Kazuhiko Ikezoe, president and general manager of Honda Philippines Inc., disclosed that the plant's capacity is even expandable to one million units if demand surge in the next few years.

Honda's move to transfer its manufacturing base from Sucat, Paranaque to the new state-of-the-art facility in Batangas is reflective of the growing popularity of motorcycle as a form of transportation in the Philippines.

Ikezoe told in an interview that the motorcycle market in the country is now in the upswing and augurs well for the company that has long been considered as the market leader in the motorcycle industry. As the top manufacturer of motorcycles in the Philippines, Ikezoe said that as early as now, Honda is bracing for a new sustained growth wave. "The motorcycle is the most convenient means of transportation and Filipinos are only discovering that now," he said. "One of our goals in Honda Philippines Inc. is to enhance CUSTOMER SATISFACTION on Honda motorcycles, to be able to create a motorcycle culture in the Philippines and contribute to the growth of the industry in general."

GROUNDBREAKING CEREMONY
HONDA PHILIPPINES INC
FEBRUARY 28, 2005

Groundbreaking ceremony led by Her Excellency Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

Compared to other Southeast Asian country, the Philippines is only awakening to the advantages of motorcycles and to the joys of solo riding. Previously, Ikezoe said motorcycle sales in the Philippines are geared mostly to tricycle operators. But now that the average Filipino has discovered the cost efficiency of motorcycles compared to cars, sales have been brisk in the last few years.

From April 2005 to March 2006 (Honda Fiscal Year period), total demand was pegged at around 590,000 units and Honda, as the market leader, sold some 301,000 units. The target for this year is 400,000 and Ikezoe is confident that it can even surpass the mark. In the run up to 2010, Honda's top executive is counting on sales of a million units for the domestic market per year.

In Asia, he said, the motorcycle is an essential transportation and solo riding is part of the way of life of the people. In Indonesia, there are roughly 23 million motorcycles in a population of 230 million or 10:1 possession ratio. In Thailand, there are 20 million motorcycles in a population of 64 million or 3:1 possession ratio.

Comparatively speaking, the Philippines has 84 million people with only two million motorcycles or 42:1 possession ratio.

This low possession ratio gives motorcycle companies a big untapped market. And Honda is eyeing this vast market as its base for an aggressive manufacturing and marketing strategy.

The new manufacturing facility in Batangas, with 1,500 factory workers and produces an average of 1,500 units per day, is a big boost to the increasing domestic demand for motorcycles.Reynaldo Gener, vice president of Honda Philippines Inc., said that what the company intends to do is not to focus on pure selling alone but to be instrumental in creating a complete motorcycle culture in the country.

"One of our major conside-rations is safety in the use of motorcycles," he said.

At the company's old facility in Paranaque, there is the Honda Riding Academy that teaches would-be motorcycle riders and those who are already veteran riders on safe motorcycle driving, especially in the city.

"We teach them the basics of motorcycle riding with a lot of emphasis on safe riding," said Adrelino Villena Sr., PR and Safety Riding manager of Honda Philippines Inc. The driving class, he said, is centered on riding theory and practice so that students can grasp a complete picture of what motorcycle riding is all about and allow them to maximize the potential of their units.

Villena disclosed that HPI will expand its Honda Riding Academy located in its old plant at Paranaque. In the provinces, Honda has even deployed riding instructors to teach customers on the safe use of their motorcycles. Complementing this instructional activity are events geared for motorcycle enthusiasts such as the increasingly popular motorcycle races in Metro Manila.

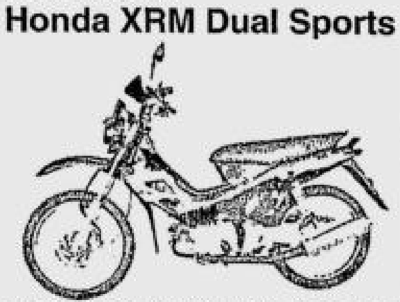
"Here we provide riders with the venue to show their skills and compete with their peers in a safe environment," said Gener. "Since most riders cannot drive fast in the highways, here we give them the opportunity to experience speed in a controlled environment specifically tailored for racing."

As there are many categories for different riding skills and type of motorcycles, everybody can join these races.

HONDA FOR EVERYONE

What is it like to ride the country's number one motorcycle brand? With six models to choose from, Honda has something for every rider - from the extremely sporty to the easy ride types that even the slim-built and the fashionable set can ride with grace. Take your pick and make riding a truly one-of-a-kind Honda experience at very affordable price.

Honda XRM Dual Sports

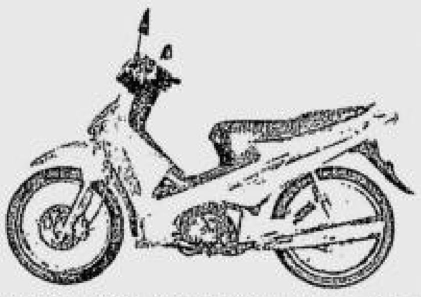


This is the first Honda motorcycle developed by the Regional Research & Development at Thailand and Singapore, which is best suited for Filpino's preference. This is the best selling motorcycle in the country. Aside from its handsome looks, the XRM is packed with safety features such as the Automatic Headlight On for added road visibility even during the day and this model can also be modified according to the customer's preference. The XRM has a 110cc four-stroke engine and is easily recognized on the road for its knuckle guard that is not only meant to enhance its look but to protect hands from scratches. It also has higher suspension for improved road handling and sport-styled meters which give immediate precise readings. The XRM is available in black, fighting red and riverside blue.

Honda Wave 100

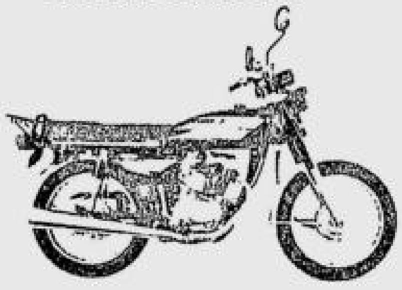
This is Honda's most stylish and affordable model and is redefining mobility for the fashionable crowd. With a 100cc four-stroke engine, it is also very fuel efficient and so compact that it is easy to handle on the road. It has a convenient U-Box storage under the seat, making it easy for riders to negotiate the road minus some baggage. It has a crystal dual headlight with clear, multi-reader lenses for enhanced visibility and twin rear suspensions for smoother rides.

Honda Wave 125



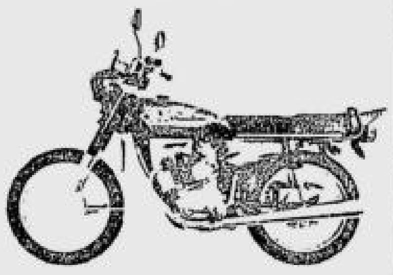
With a 125cc four-stroke engine, this Honda Wave is packed with more power for a more exciting ride. With 82.5 kilometers per liter mileage, it is guaranteed to save as much as 30 percent fuel. As engine oil change is only required very 8,000 kilometers, riders are assured of more cost savings. The Honda Wave 125 in fiery orange is a site to behold on the road. Style is its number one appeal. It is also equipped with Automatic Headlight On for added road visibility, has bigger and wider wheels and higher front and rear suspension.

Honda TMX 125



Besides its sporty good looks, this Honda model has high capacity fuel tank at nine liters and bigger more durable front suspension and hub for power riding. It has a four-stroke, OHV, air-cooled engine with a displacement of 24.1cc.As it has passed the Euro 1, a world standard which surpasses the Philippine Clear Air Act, it is quiet running and has clean emissions.

Honda TMX 155



Speed and power is what TMX 155 is for. With a higher engine displacement of 155.3cc, its maximum output is 9.29kw (12.6GPS)/8000 rpm. It features a heavy-duty stainless muffler, durable front suspension, hub and fender and is fitted with double rear shock for tricycle use. If you like it fast and heavy duty, this is it for you. This model was Number One in Sales at the Business Category last year.

Honda XR200

This Honda flagship model claims to be sporty enough to conquer all roads. With electronic ignition, aluminum wheels, powerful 200cc engine, sure grip disc brake and superior rear cushion, it is truly meant for rough and rugged riding. The XR200 is king of the road and will take you anywhere.

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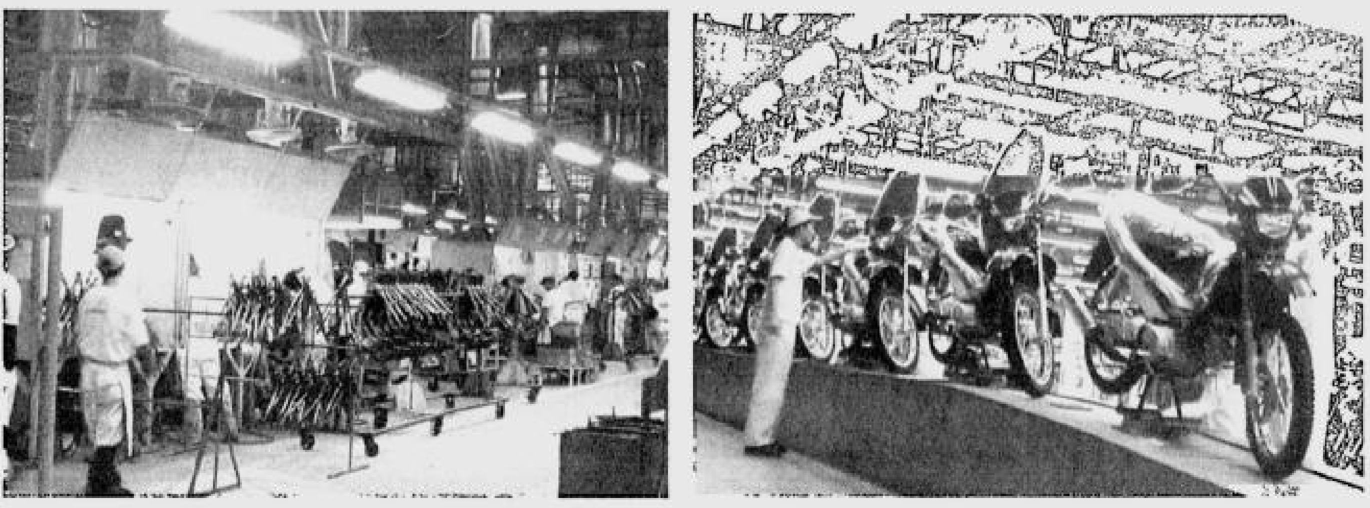
Tel. no.: (084) 822-5338

The Honda Brand Advantage


PRODUCTION AREA

As the motorcycle culture slowly evolves, Ikezoe said that part of the Honda strategy is to make the units more affordable to a wider segment of the population.

Currently, a brand new unit typically sells for P50,000 to P70,000 depending on the model.

"Our goal is to be able to offer units for as low as P30,000 to P40,000 in the near future," said Ikezoe. "A Honda's advanced technology will make this possible in the next few years."

Honda's promise is to reduce cost without diminishing quality.

"Quality and riders' safety are important to us. Our homegrown technology, which is the pride of Honda all over the world, will make it possible in the very near future to offer low-cost units at very high quality," he explains.

"Honda technology is used everywhere - in power products, motorcycles, cars, jetplanes and humanoid robots. That alone speaks about the role of Honda technology in the world. We will certainly be able to use this cutting edge technology to manufacture motorcycles that are high on quality but at reduced price," said Gener.

Ikezoe stressed that as cost of ownership is one of the main barriers to expanding the market for motorcycles, Honda has taken it upon itself to use its state-of-the-art facility and technology to be able to produce the best quality motorcycles in this country with very high quality. As it is now, cheap imports and imitation products are flooding the market, but Ikezoe emphasized that only original Honda motorcycles can provide riders with the safety and quality assurance.

Villena disclosed that for several decades already, Honda is the preferred brand of motorcycles in the Philippines.

"Even in the provinces, when you say motorcycle, people instantaneously think of Honda. It has even become a generic name for motorcycles," Villena said.

The Honda Vision

The company actually has big plans for its operations in the Philippines. Ikezoe told that when they achieve their manufacturing and sales target of one million units per year, hopefully by 2010, they would be gearing up for the export market.

"We need to hit the one million mark and then we will start exporting Philippine-made Honda motorcycles to the world," he said.

Gener disclosed that one of the cornerstones of its human resource education is to strengthen the skills of its local engineers and developing a culture of excellence within the ranks of its employees.

Ikezoe calls it "mind revolution," or a mindset that is focused on the attainment of exemplary work ethics and excellence.

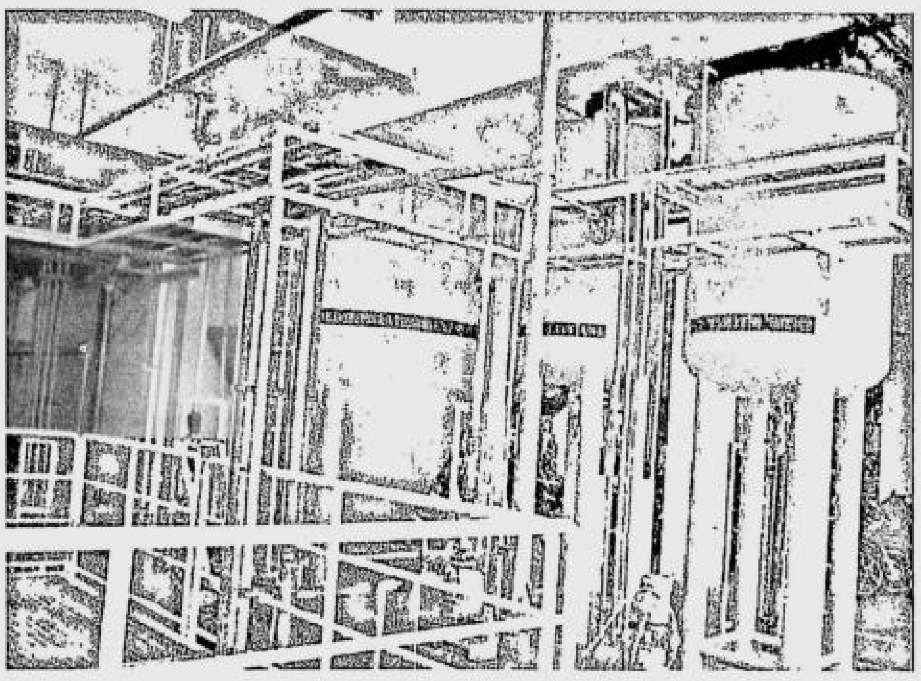
"Without training, this will not be possible. We focus a lot on training both on the hard and soft side of technology," Ikezoe said. "We aim high, which is to serve as a benchmark in the Asia-Oceania region. Our vision is to be able to build a motorcycle total business in the Philippines that will not zero in on sales alone but will likewise be able to offer after sales service, spareparts sales, safety & motor recreation, and second-hand activities. We will touch-up all kinds of activities, which is essentially based on CUSTOMER'S SATISFACTION, to be close-at-hand to customer's motorcycle life itself. Through all such activities, Honda wants to become the Company which the Filipino people expect to exist in this country.

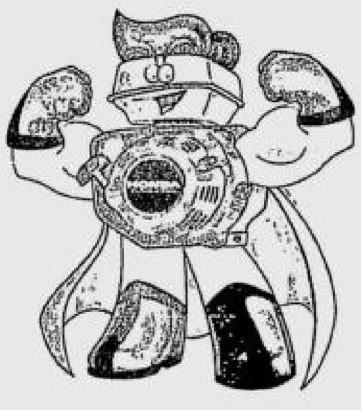
As it is now, Honda Philippines has around 400 dealers nationwide and plans are underway for grassroots activities. Honda recognizes that another challenge to overcome in this country are low riding skills even for those who have been driving motorcycle for years, low motorcycle riding awareness.

But all of these are changing now. Ikezoe said that solo riders now comprise 80 percent of the motorcycle market, with only 20 percent for sales of units to be converted into tricycles.

"We are getting there," said Villena. "It's only a matter of time."

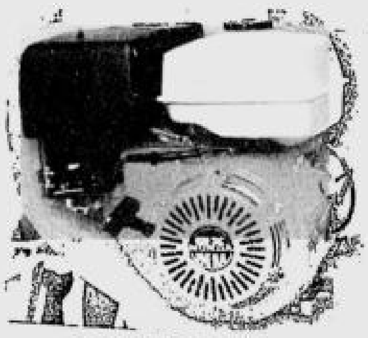
Honda now has six models to choose from (see related article) and it has something to offer to all types of customers and budgets.

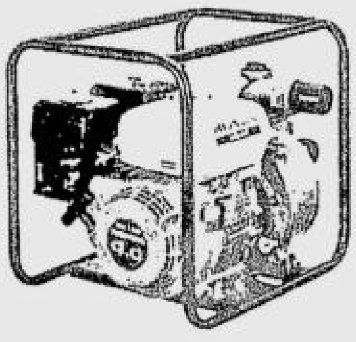

Waste Water Treatment

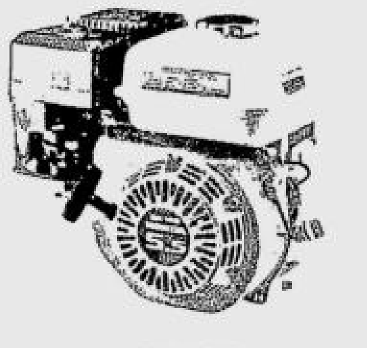


HONDA
POWER PRODUCTS

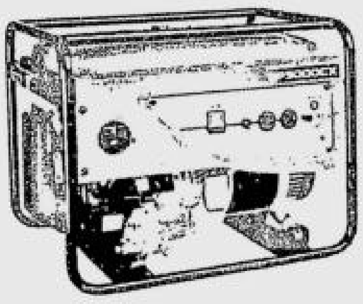
ENGINES

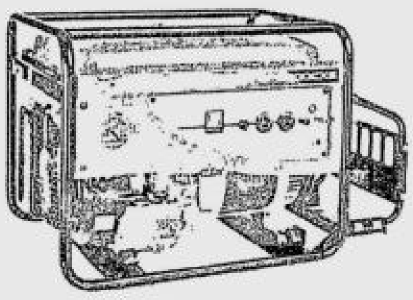

GXMEGA

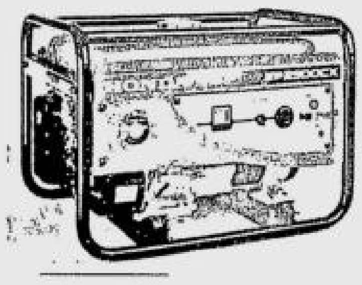

WB20XT


GX160

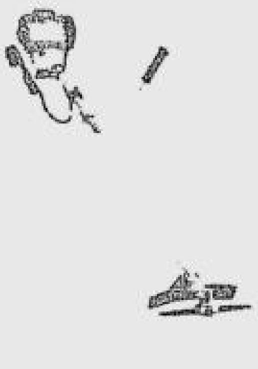
GENERATORS


EP5000 CX


EP6500 CXS


EP2500 CX

BRUSH CUTTER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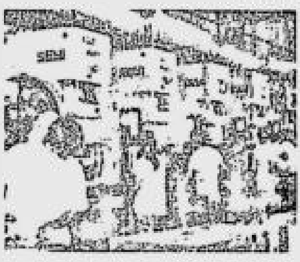
Fabricator Philippines Incorporated
35 Oliveros Drive, Balintawak, Quezon City
Phone: +63(2) 454-6576 & 77
Fax: +63(2) 454-6578



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Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

Maynila, Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project/Brief Description	One (1) lot – Engagement of services of a contractor for the lease/rental of brand new copier machines per BSP Terms of Reference
Approved Budget for the Contract	P 12,625,391.56
Contract Duration	One (1) year

Prospective bidders should have undertaken a similar project within the last five (5) years with an amount of at least 50% of the approved budget for the contract. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference(s), Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	*Schedule*
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	11 July 2006 - 27 July 2006 not later than 1:30 p.m.
2. Pre-Bid Conference	28 July 2006 10:00 a.m.
3. Opening of Bids	15 August 2006 2:00 p.m. Room MR2A
4. Bid Evaluation	These shall be in accordance with the prescribed periods allowed in the Implementing Rules & Regulations (IRR)-A of R.A. No. 9184 dated 10 January 2003.
5. Post-qualification	
6. Notice of Award	

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P6,300.00 to the BSP Cashier.

The BSP assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

The BSP reserves the right to reject any and all bid proposals, or declare the bidding a failure, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this Invitation.

(Sgd.) **JUAN DE ZUÑIGA, JR.**
Chairman

(PDI--July 19, 2006)

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merrit Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5209

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

Shaffer Parts under FDB 63444
Approved Budget: PHP 4,500,000.00

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o Ms. Rosanne Bongco starting July 19, 2006 and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P400.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on July 27, 2006, 2:00 p.m. at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than 2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Wall Clock Time) of August 8, 2006. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. Late bids shall not be accepted.

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

(Sgd.) Francis M. Dolor
Bids and Awards Committee I

(PDI--July 19 & 26, 2006)

MANILA GAS CORPORATION (MGC)
INTER-ISLAND GAS SERVICES INC. (IIGSI)

INVITATION TO PUBLIC BIDDING

MGC/IIGSI offers for sale through sealed public bidding on August 09, 2006, from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the NDC Audio Visual Room, Penthouse, NDC Building, 116 Tordesillas St., Salcedo Village, Makati City, the following real estate properties:

1. ***Paco North Property (MGC property)***
   The North Property is located at Sanciangco St., Paco, Manila and is composed of 3 contiguous lots:

TCT-34304	-	2,608.20 sq.m.
TCT-33924	-	2,231.40
TCT-33924	-	7,431.20
		12,270.80 sq.m.

2. ***Cebu Property (IIGSI property)***
   The Cebu Property is located along the Barangay Road, Barangay Opao, Mandaue City and is composed of 2 ajoining lots:

TCT-18998	-	2,128.00 sq.m.
TCT-18999		9,529.00
		11,657.00 sq.m.

Due diligence period is from July 19 - August 04, 2006 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. to be coordinated with the MGC/IIGSI Bids Committee. Interested parties may secure the Bidding Package starting July 19, 2006 from MGC c/o Mr. Efren Mancia, 7/F NDC Building, 116 Tordesillas St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. Tel. No. 8404838 loc. 223 & 313 / Fax No. 8404862 and IIGSI c/o Mr. Charlie Villegas, 3215 District 5 Sangi, Barangay Pajo, Lapu-Lapu City. Tel. No. 032-3418874. A pre-bidding conference is scheduled on July 27, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. at the NDC Audio Visual Room, Penthouse, NDC Building, 116 Tordesillas St., Salcedo Village, Makati City.

The sale of the above properties shall be strictly on **CASH**, on an **"AS-IS-WHERE-IS" BASIS.**

MGC/IIGSI reserves the right to reject any and all bids, or to waive any of the formalities required, or to accept only such bids or portion of bids which is deemed advantageous to MGC/IIGSI.

(PDI - July 19, 20 & 21, 2006)

PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Bldg. 5, Ground Floor Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5388

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO RE-BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

Description and PR no.	Approved Budget	Pre-Bid Conference	Bid Opening
Printing of 160,000 pieces 2007 PNOC-EDC Wall Calendar under PR- 602922	PHP 4,160,000.00	July 27, 2006	August 17, 2006
Various Cable Trays and Accessories under GN- 516100/519001/519002	PHP 2,000,159.00	July 19, 2006	August 9, 2006
Flowmeter; Non-Invasive Ultrasonic, Portable under PN- 637206 Infrared Imaging Camera under PN-637207 Power Quality Stabilizer under PN- 637213	PHP 419,000.00 for PN- 637206 PHP 1,435,000.00 for PN- 637207 PHP 377,300.00 for PN- 637213	July 19, 2006	August 11, 2006

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o Cielo B. de Castro starting July 14, 2006, from 9:30 AM to 3:30 PM and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P400.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on the above date, 2:00 p.m. at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department at the above address and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than 2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Office Wall Clock Time) of the above date. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. Late bids shall not be accepted.

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--July 12 & 19, 2006)

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Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late **Remedios G. Daba** was self adjudicated by heir as Per Doc. No. 190, Page No. 38, Book No. IV, Series of 2006 before Notary Public Cesar R. Santiago of Makati City (7/10/06).

(PDI--July 12, 19 & 26, 2006)

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Republic of the Philippines

COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS

Manila

IN THE MATTER OF THE ENFORCEMENT OF THE 2ND PAR. OF SECTION 23 AND SECTION 24.7 OF R.A. 9189 (OVERSEAS ABSENTEE VOTING LAW OF 2003) RELATING TO THE PROHIBITION OF MOVEMENT OF A PUBLIC OFFICER OR EMPLOYEE FOR PURPOSES OF THE 14 MAY 2007 SENATORIAL AND PARTY-LIST ELECTIONS.

ABALOS, Benjamin S.	Chairman
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.	Commissioner
TUASON, Florentino A. Jr.	Commissioner
BRAWNER, Romeo A.	Commissioner
SARMIENTO, Rene V.	Commissioner
FERRER, Nicodemo T.	Commissioner

Promulgated: 17 July 2006

RESOLUTION NO. 7686

WHEREAS, the Overseas Absentee Voting Law of 2003 (R.A. 9189) provides in the second paragraph of Section 23 thereof that:

xxx xxx xxx

> No officer or member of the foreign service corps, including those belonging to attached agencies shall be transferred, promoted, extended, recalled or otherwise moved from his current post or position one (1) year before and three (3) months after the day of elections, except upon the approval of the Commission.

WHEREAS, Section 24.7 of the same law provides:

> **Sec. 24. Prohibited Acts.** – In addition to the prohibited acts provided by law, it shall be unlawful:
>
> xxx xxx xxx
>
> **24.7** For any public officer or employee to cause the transfer, promotion, extension, recall of any member of the foreign service corps, including members of the attached agencies, or otherwise cause the movement of any such member from his current post or position one (1) year before and three (3) months after the day of elections, without securing the prior approval of the Commission.
>
> xxx xxx xxx

WHEREAS, there is a need to issue a Resolution in order that the Commission may implement the above-cited provisions of R.A. 9189 (Pp. vs. Reyes, et. al., G.R. No. 115022).

WHEREAS, the next national elections to be participated in by overseas absentee voters shall be the 14 May 2007 Senatorial and Party-List Elections and therefore, the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) through the members of the foreign service corps and other government agencies holding offices at the different Philippine embassies, consulates and other establishments abroad shall again be involved in the conduct of voting, counting and canvassing of votes thereat.

NOW, THEREFORE, pursuant to the powers vested in it by the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code, Republic Act No. 9189 and other related election laws, the Commission **RESOLVED**, as it hereby RESOLVES as follows:

Section 1. No officer or member of the foreign service corps, including those belonging to attached agencies that have offices abroad, shall be transferred, promoted, extended, recalled or otherwise moved from his current post or position from the date of effectivity of this Resolution until 12 August 2007.

Section 2. No movement of any member of the foreign service corps shall be made unless the same is approved by the Commission through the Chairman of the Committee on Overseas Absentee Voting (COAV).

Section 3. Request for movement shall be made in writing by the authorized officials of concerned agencies stating the cause or reason for such movement and stating why said movement should be made an exemption to the prohibition. The request shall specifically identify the government personnel concerned, his current posting and his next assignment abroad.

Section 4. This Resolution shall take effect on the seventh (7th) day after its publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the Philippines.

Section 5. The Education and Information Department (EID) of the Commission shall cause the publication and widest dissemination of this Resolution and shall furnish copies hereof to the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), Department of Transportation and Communications (DOTC), Philippine Postal Corporation (Philpost), Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA), Commission on Filipinos Overseas (CFO), the Maritime Industry Authorities (MARINA), Philippine National Police (PNP) and other concerned government agencies.

Approved this 17th day of July 2006.

SO ORDERED.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS
Chairman

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

ROMEO A. BRAWNER
Commissioner

RENE V. SARMIENTO
Commissioner

NICODEMO T. FERRER
Commissioner

(PDI–July 19, 2006)

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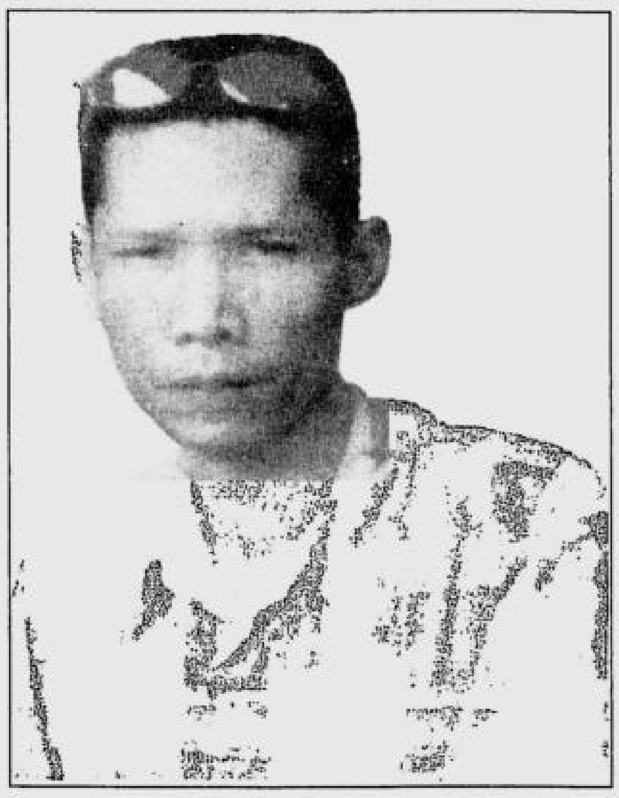
NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



SAMER PALAO, ***alias "Tangkad" or "Andy",*** whose picture appears above, is charged with Kidnapping with Murder before the Regional Trial Court of Lanao Del Sur, Branch 8, Marawi City, docketed as Criminal Case No. 5033-06.

Mr. Palao is presently a fugitive from the law.

A reward of **THREE HUNDRED THOUSAND PESOS (Php 300,000.00)** will be given to any person and/or group of persons who can provide information leading to the arrest of the accused.

Please contact 0922-6844962 or 0927-7971257.

(PDI--July 19, 2006)

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines will receive sealed bids on August 2, 2006, 2:00 p.m., 12th Floor, Suite 5, Executive Lounge of the DBP Head Office, Sen.Gil Puyat Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City for the following properties on **CASH BASIS**:

CODE NO.	DESCRIPTION	AREA (sq.m.)	LOCATION	Minimum Bid
REAL ESTATE				
METRO MANILA				
AM-MC-133	House and lot (TCT N-234441)	403	No. 38, Road 7, Project 6, Quezon City	P 4,100,000.00
BENGUET				
AM-JA-134	126 individually titled subdivision lots (109 vacant lots, 4 with imp. & 13 road lots)	21,247	Sta. Elena Hills Subd. Ambiong, La Trinidad	P 12,009,100.00
LAGUNA				
AM-JA-135	Industrial lot (TCT No. T-231486) w/ bldg., facilities & machinery & equipment.	24,294	117 Progress Ave. corner Industry Drive, Carmelrayville Industrial Subd., Canlubang	P 135,635,120.00
QUEZON				
AM-CP-136	2-parcels of agro-residential lots (TCT Nos. T-20548 & 20549) with bldgs. & imp.	6,264	Bo. Comon, Infanta	P 3,147,500.00

BIDDERS ARE REMINDED:

1. To inspect the properties to determine their actual condition before the bidding;
2. To submit in DBP's official bid form available at the AMD-Acquired Assets, Ground Floor, DBP Head Office during office hours; and
3. To be on time. No bids will be accepted once unsealing of the bids commences. The sale shall be subject to other terms and conditions which may be imposed by the Bank.

DBP RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN, OR TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE BANK IS FINAL AND BINDING.

For inquiries, please call telephone numbers: 892-1566/893-7172 or 818-9511 local 2158/2159 for Code starting with AM.

ASSET MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

(PDI – July 19 & 20, 2006)

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Republic of the Philippines
ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Pilar Street, Zamboanga City

SECTION 1. INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Zamboanga City Water District, through its Bids and Awards Committee II (BAC II), invites Suppliers/Manufacturers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

LOT NO.	BRIEF DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT (ABC)	COST OF BID DOCUMENTS	DATE OF ISSUANCE OF BID DOCUMENTS	DATE OF PRE-BID CONFERENCE	DATE OF SUBMISSION OPENING OF BIDS
1	Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of One (1) Hi-Rate Type Filtration System	P 2,912,000.00	P 1,500.00	July 17 to 21, 2006	July 26, 2006	August 7, 2006
2	Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Electro-mechanical Equipments: 20 HpSubmersible Pump/ Motor & Discharge Pipings, Appurtenances & Fittings	P 635,375.00	P 600.00	July 17 to 21, 2006	July 26, 2006	August 7, 2006
3	Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of Electro-mechanical Equipments: 15 Hp Submersible Pump/ Motor & Discharge Pipings, Appurtenances & Fittings	P 526,064.00	P 500.00	July 17 to 21, 2006	July 26, 2006	August 7, 2006
4	Package Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of the following: A) 100mmO Electro-Magnetic Flowmeter, B) Integrated GSM Datalogger	P 403,200.00	P 500.00	July 24 to 28, 2006	July 31, 2006	August 14, 2006
5	Package Supply, Installation, Testing & Commissioning of the following: A) 75mmO Electro-Magnetic Flowmeter, B) Integrated GSM Datalogger	P 392,000.00	P 500.00	July 24 to 28, 2006	July 31, 2006	August 14, 2006
6	Supply of Brand New 54 KVA Rated Standby Power, Trailer-Mounted Closed Type Genset (Mobile Genset)	P 900,000.00	P 1,000.00	July 24 to 28, 2006	July 31, 2006	August 14, 2006
7	Supply, Testing & Commissioning of 54 KVA Rated Standby Power Generator Unit	P 1,030,400.00	P 1,000.00	July 24 to 28, 2006	July 31, 2006	August 14, 2006

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules & Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted to organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest of outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines, as specified in Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process of the Eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with lowest calculated bid (LCB) shall be advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall be then awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.

All Bids must be accompanied by a *Bid Security in the form of Cash, Certified Check, Cashier's and Manager's Check in the amount of Twenty-Nine Thousand One Hundred Twenty Pesos (P29,120.00)* for Lot 1, *Six Thousand Three Hundred Fifty-Three Pesos and Seventy-Six Centavos (P6,353.76)* for Lot 2, *Five Thousand Two Hundred Sixty Pesos and Sixty-Four Centavos (P5,260.64)* for Lot 3, *Four Thousand Thirty Two Pesos (P4,032.00)* for Lot 4, *Three Thousand Nine Hundred Twenty Pesos (P3,920.00)* for Lot 5, *Nine Thousand Pesos (P9,000.00)* for Lot 6, *& Ten Thousand Three Hundred Four Pesos (P10,304.00)* for Lot 7. Late Bids shall not be accepted.

Bid opening shall be at the 2nd Floor, ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT Main Office Building, Pilar St., Zamboanga City. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the address below.

The ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT reserves the right to accept or reject any Bids, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time or prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

ZAMBOANGA CITY WATER DISTRICT
Mr. Noel M. Kawaguchi
Pilar St., Zamboanga City 7000
Telephone No. (062) 991-1556
Email
Fax (062) 991-2799

(Sgd.) ALEJO S. ROJAS, JR.
BAC II Chairman

(PDI–July 19, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
Province of Surigao del Sur
MUNICIPALITY OF BAROBO

INVITATION FOR RE-BID
CONSTRUCTION OF BAROBO PUBLIC MARKET

"The Works include the General Requirements Site Works; Concrete Works; Masonry Works; Wood and Plastic Works; Thermal Moisture Protection Works; Doors and Windows; Finishing Works; Mechanical Works; and Electrical Works"

Loan No. 1843-PHI

1. The Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank toward the cost of the Mindanao Basic Urban Services Sector Project (MBUSSP), and it intends to apply part of the whole of the proceeds of this loan, together with the GOP counterpart funds to payments under the contract for the **Construction of Barobo Public Market/012-05PM.**
2. The **Municipality of Barobo, Surigao del Sur**, now invites sealed Bids from eligible Bidders for the construction of the New Barobo Public Market which has a total floor area of 1,713 sq.m. The works shall include the General Requirements; Site Works; Concrete Works, Masonry Works. Metal Works; Wood and Plastic Works; Thermal and Moisture Protection Works; Doors and Windows; Finishing Works; Mechanical Works; and Electrical Works. Completion of the Works is required within **305 calendar days.**
3. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with relevant procedures for open competitive bidding as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act," to the extent it is consistent with Asian Development Bank's procurement procedures and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries as defined in "Guidelines for Procurement Under Asian Developmenment Bank Loans"
4. The documents required in the Eligibility Documents shall be submitted as part of the Technical Documents of the Bidders as provided in the instructions to the Bidders.
5. Interested Bidders *may obtain further information from* **the Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), Municipality of Barobo, Surigao del Sur**; and inspect the Bidding Documents at the, from 8.00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on July 19, 2006 to August 17, 2006.
6. A complete set of Bidding Documents in English may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below, and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of **Six Thousand Pesos *(Php 6,000.00)***. The bidding documents shall be received personally by the bidder of his authorized representative on or before **August 17, 2006, 5:00 pm.**
7. The **BAC, Municipality of Barobo** will hold a pre-bid conference open to all Eligible Bidders on **August 3, 2006 at 2:00 p.m.** at the **Municipal Budget Office, Barobo, Surigao del Sur.**
8. Eligible bidders must submit their Bids to the **BAC, Barobo, Surigao del Sur** on or before **August 18, 2006 @ 2:00 p.m.** All Bids must be accompanied by a **Bid Security** in the form of **Bank Guarantee** and in the amount of Four Hundred Sixty Thousand Pesos (Php 460,000.00) or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be on **August 18, 2006 @ 2:00 p.m.** at the **Municipal Budget Office, Barobo Municipal Hall, Barobo, Surigao del Sur.** Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders representatives who choose to attend at the address below.
9. To be considered eligible and qualified a Bidder must:
   a. has a successful experience as prime contractor in the construction of at least one (1) work of a nature and complexity equivalent to the works in the last five (5) years, such being verifiable from completion certificates. To comply with this requirement the single contract cited should be at least Fifteen Million Pesos (Php 15.00M).
   b. have a minimum average annual construction turnover over the last three (3) years equal to Nineteen Million Pesos (Php 19.00M).
   c. submit audited balance sheets or, if not required by law of the applicants country, other financial statements acceptable to the Procuring Entity, for the last five (5) years to demonstrate the current soundness of the applicants' financial position and its prospective long-term profitability
10. Completion of the Works is required within **305 Calendar Days.**
11. The **Municipality of Barobo, Surigao del Sur**, reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Attention: MS. MINA U. RONQUILLO
Municipal Budget Office
Municipal Hall, Barobo, Surigao del Sur
Contact No. 0917-703-6340

(Sgd.) MINA U. RONQUILLO
Municipal Budget Officer
BAC Chairman

(PDI–July 19 & 26, 2006)

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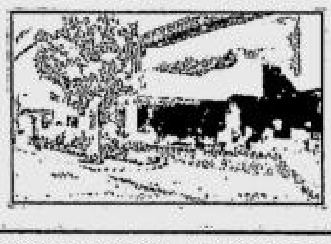

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(PDI–July 19, 2006)

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Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF MISAMIS ORIENTAL
MUNICIPALITY OF GITAGUM
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Infrastructure For Rural Productivity Enhancement Sector (InfRES) Project

BIDS & AWARD COMMITTEE
INVITATION FOR BID

Date: July 05, 2006
Loan No.: 1772-PHI
Contract No.: SP-10-002-01

1. The Republic of the Philippines has received a loan from the Asian Development Bank (ADB) towards the cost of the INFRASTRUCTURE FOR RURAL PRODUCTIVITY ENHANCEMENT SECTOR (InfRES) PROJECT and it is intended that part of the proceeds of this loan will be applied to eligible payments under the Contract for Gitagum Farm-to-Market Road (9 Segment). Bidding is open to all bidders from eligible source countries of the Asian Development Bank that:
   (a) are registered with the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board to undertake Infrastructure projects as a Class 'Medium A' with License Category B contractor or better.
   (b) have undertaken within the past five (5) years, as the contractor, management contractor, 3 (three) road construction work, projects valued at least Php 23,000,000 Pesos each for single 'Medium A' contractor, (and for a joint venture).
2. The Local Government Unit of Gitagum ("the Employer") invites sealed bids from bidders with the above qualifications for the Upgrading of 9-segments Farm to Market Roads, 16.26 kms. total length. The works includes supply, placing and compaction of Sub-Aggregate Base Course and Aggregates Base Course, Grouted Riprap Canal, Slope Protection, Double-Barrel RC Box Culvert, RCPC, PCCP, or until such completion of the works. The Contract Period is twelve months (365 calendar days).
3. Bidders may obtain further information from, and inspect and acquire the bidding documents, at the office of the Employer, at

Office of the Municipal Mayor
InfRES Local Project Office
Municipality of Gitagum
Province Misamis Oriental
Region X

4. A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased by interested eligible bidders on submission of a written application to the above office, and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php Ten Thousand (Pesos 10,000.00).
5. All Bids must be accompanied by a Security of 2% of the total Bid Price or an equivalent amount in a freely convertible currency, and must be delivered to the above address on or before 10:00 A.M. on September 04, 2006. Bids will be opened at 1:00 P.M. on the same date as above, in the presence of bidders' representative who choose to attend. The pre-bid conference will be held on August 23, 2006, 2:00 p.m. at the Municipal Hall Building.
6. The Employer reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or formality, assume no obligation whatsoever to compensate indemnity to the contractor/bidder for any expense that they incur in the preparation of bid to accept the bid most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) ENGR. WALTER U. ORCERADA
BAC Chairman

(PDI–July 12 & 19, 2006)

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF ORIENTAL NEGROS
Dumaguete City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
FOR THE SUPPLY OF FINANCIAL ADVISORY SERVICES TO FLOAT LGU BONDS

1. The Provincial Government of Oriental Negros intends to issue Local Government Bonds to fund its income generating project and requires the assistance/advise of a consultant in the floatation of said bonds;
2. The service fee is 3% of the total amount floated not to exceed P5,000,000.00 which is the Approved Budget Cost (ABC) for said services, for a duration of 365 days and further conditioned on a "No cure no pay basis";
3. Interested bidders are invited to submit letters of intent for *eligibility and short listing*. The deadline for submission shall be on or before August 8, 2006. Only bidders who submit the required documents within the aforesaid period shall be included in the short list and be issued with documents
4. The criteria for short listing are:
   a. The consultant/adviser must be a duly registered proprietorship, partnership, corporation or joint venture as defined by RA 9184.
   b. Must have at least successfully floated 3 LGU bonds in the last 3 years
   c. Agrees to provide consultancy services contingent on the successful bond issuance,
   d. Must submit aside from the required eligibility documents, a list of key personnel with curriculum vitae.
5. A pre-bid conference is scheduled on August 15, 2006 at 10:00 A.M. at the Governors Conference Room, Mezzanine. The opening of bids is scheduled on August 29, 2006 at the PGSO office. Only proposals from short listed consultants will be opened and the process for the eligibility check is contained in the Instruction to Bidders. The contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who is determined as such during post qualification.
6. In the evaluation, the QBE procedure will be used with the following criteria and rating:
   a. Technical capability of personnel,
   b. The experience, proficiency and quality of performance, in other words, the over-all track record of the consultant,
   c. Plan of approach and methodology used
7. The Provincial Government of Oriental Negros reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any required formality and award the contract to the bidder whose bid as evaluated is the most advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) ATTY. ISMAEL P. MARTINEZ
BAC CHAIRMAN
Provincial General Services Officer
Capitol Area, Dumaguete City
Tel. No. (035) 226-1008/225-2433

(PDI–July 19 & 26, 2006)

24-HR HOTLINES
POEA 722-1144
722-1155

OBITUARIES

Our Dearly Beloved

PEDRO LOSANTAS ACUÑA
"INDO"

of Legazpi City

Peacefully joined his Creator on Thursday, July 13, 2006 at the age of 83.

His loving wife **Luz Ruivivar Acuña**; children **Nohra & Benjie Baltasar, Edith & Bong Mateo, Ting & Mercy (Ortega)**; grandchildren **Kathryn & Patrick, Marvin, Emil, Chester, Team, Butch, Maxine, Louise, Bonji, Fritzie, Michael & Michelle**; great-grandchild **Tricia**; relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at his home at 92 Rosario St., Legazpi City. Interment will be on Friday, July 21, 2006 at the Albay Catholic Cemetery, Legazpi City after the 3 p.m. Mass at the St. Gregory the Great Cathedral.

THE AUGUSTINIAN SISTERS OF OUR LADY OF CONSOLACION
beg you to recommend to God in your prayers
and sacrifices the soul of our dear

SISTER BRENDA FULLON, OSA

(Lutgarda Flandez Fullon)
(June 16, 1936 – July 18, 2006)
Who passed away on July 18, 2006 at the age of 70.
MAY SHE REST IN PEACE
Funeral Mass will be on: July 19, 2006 at 8:00 a.m. at the
LA CONSOLACION CONVENT CHAPEL
273 SANTOLAN ROAD, SAN JUAN, MM
INTERMENT WILL FOLLOW AT THE LA LOMA CEMETERY
IMMEDIATELY AFTER THE MASS

ENGRACIA D. CORONEL

Peacefully passed away in the Grace of our Lord on July 17, 2006 at the age of 98.

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, located at G. Araneta Ave., Quezon City.

Interment will be on July 20, 2006 at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park, Baesa, Caloocan City at 2:00 p.m.

Death Notice

Cresiporo C. Astrero peacefully joined our Creator on July 13, 2006.

OBITUARIES

ARMANDO ALCARAZ LANZANAS
"DING"

May 4, 1933 – July 17, 2006

Laguna Institute HS Batch '52
***President*, Rotary Club-JP Rizal 1983**

Peacefully joined our Lord on July 17, 2006 at the age of 73.

His bereaved wife **Divinia**; children **Dr. Ronaldo** and **Dr. Merceditha, Dr. Maricel** and **Dr. Ronaldo Elazegui, Dr. Rommel** and **Rowena, US Air Force SSgt. Armando**; grandchildren **Nina** and **Bucho, Denise** and **Monty, Kirby**; sisters **Ligaya, Dr. Imelda** and **Dr. Edward Yu, Portia** and **Rupert Lanzador**; brother **Court of Appeals Justice Enrico Lanzanas** and **Carmelita**; nephews and nieces, relatives and friends, request the pious readers to join them in their prayers for the eternal repose of his soul and everlasting joy in the eternal Kingdom of our Creator.

His remains lie in state at the Rizal Memorial Park Mortuary, Chipeco Ave., Calamba City.

Interment will be on Sunday, July 23, 2006 at 3:00 p.m. at the Lanzanas Family Mausoleum at the Rizal Memorial Park, Chipeco Ave., Calamba City.

BUSINESS

Mine investments hit $50M

Gov't expects mining firms to pour in $122 million in 2006

By Blanche S. Rivera and Christine A. Gaylican

ALMOST $50 MILLION IN MINing investments were poured into the country in the first five months of the year as four of the 24 priority mining projects accelerated the development of their sites.

The Mines and Geosciences Bureau reported $47.91 million in investments as of May. Palawan Nickel Project in Coal Bay infused $22.71 million, which accounted for almost half of the investments. Tampakan Copper Project was second with $8 million investments so far.

The controversial Rapu-Rapu Polymetallic Project by Australian firm Lafayette Mining Ltd. infused the third biggest amount with $6.45 million.

The MGB expects a total of $122 million in mining investments this year, according to MGB Mining Economics chief Benjamin De Vera.

The Supreme Court recently upheld the validity of the financial or technical assistance agreement (FTAA) of Climax-Arimco Mining Corp. (CAMC), now Australasian Philippines Mining Inc., for the Didipio Gold and Copper Project in Quirino and Nueva Vizacaya, paving the way for the start of constructions at the mine site.

A huge part of the investments this year came in the form of ground preparation for mining, and construction of roads, offices, stockpile areas and shipping areas, according to the MGB.

Most of the 23 priority mining projects are on the drilling stage, while some are installing improvements, De Vera said.

The MGB initially projected $193 million in mining investments this year, but reduced the projection when several companies signified that they would start their project developments next year.

De Vera said the Berong Nickel Project by Atlas Consolidated Mining and Development Corp. in Palawan has also reported accelerated developments in the site, which could boost total investments by yearend.

The MGB is also looking at investments from the Adlay-Cagdianao-Tandawa Project in Surigao and the Siana Gold Project, which is in the advanced exploration stage.

The government's 24 priority mining projects have generated $494.57 million in actual investments and employed 5,675 people in the first half of the year, according to the MGB.

The government is eyeing a total of $6.4 billion in mining investments from the 24 priority projects all over the Philippines.

The Arroyo administration, through the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, is aggressively promoting mining as the propeller of economic growth despite concerns raised by religious, indigenous and environmentalist groups.

Yesterday, Lafayette announced that it has successfully passed the initial stage of its 30-day test run that will pave the way for the full resumption of operation of its Rapu Rapu mines in Albay.

"We are satisfied with the first phase," said Michael Cabalda, an official of the Mines and Geosciences Bureau. "Lafayette's pollution devices could so far withstand the heavy rains and we have recommended that they be allowed to progress to the next stage."

According to Lafayette chief executive officer and president Carlos G. Dominguez, as soon as the firm passes the test, "our next step would be to seek permission from the DENR to allow us to go full steam with production."

Lafayette voluntarily suspended its operations last year following two incidents of cyanide spill at its mine site on Rapu Rapu islandl.

The DENR later lifted the suspension on Lafayette's operations.

NTC clarifies rule on new FM radio stations

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE NATIONAL TELECOMMUnications Commission has assured member-stations of the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster ng Pilipinas that the agency's order allowing the establishment of more community radio stations in the country would not affect the existing stations' viability.

The commission on July 7, 2006 issued Memorandum Circular 02-06-2006, which allowed the establishment of more low-power radio stations in the country.

The KBP, however, expressed concern that the establishment of new stations could threaten the viability of existing stations that were already hard-pressed to compete with nontraditional channels, such as the Internet and billboards for market share and advertising revenue.

In an explanatory memo on the guidelines and technical standards for 500-watt FM stations, the NTC said it would limit the number of new radio stations to 200 to avoid saturating the FM market. It stressed that only 30 stations would be allowed to operate in the same province.

The NTC said there were 139 low-power FM radio stations in operation and that the listening public was greatly benefiting from the community news and programming that these stations were providing. It also noted that the low transmitter power required by these stations would reduce the costs of broadcast operators wanting to penetrate remote areas in the country.

The NTC said it would allow the operation of low-power stations only in areas still not served by Class A and B broadcasters.

The agency also came up with a list of areas where new low-power FM stations would not be allowed, noting that traditional FM radio stations were already established there. The list includes Metro Manila; Bangued, Abra; Baguio City; Laoag City, Ilocos Norte; Vigan, Ilocos Sur; San Fernando, La Union; Dagupan City, Pangasinan; Tuguegarao, Cagayan; Cauayan, Isabela; Santiago, Isabela; Bayombong, Nueva Vizcaya; Solano, Nueva Vizcaya; Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija; San Fernando, Pampanga; Mabalacat, Pampanga; Tarlac City, Tarlac; Olongapo City, Zambales; SBMA, Zambales; San Pablo City, Laguna; Lipa City; Batangas City; Laurel, Batangas, and Puerto Princesa City, Palawan.

Existing low-power FM radio stations will be allowed to continue operating where they are.

PSALM says officers ready to return bonus

By Abigail L. Ho

MEMBERS OF POWER SECTOR ASSETS and Liabilities Management Corp. (PSALM) are willing to give back the P6.4-million corporate variable incentive award (CVIA) that they got in 2004, if they will be told so.

"Effective governance entails recognition of merit. However, if the final judicial determination specifies that PSALM does not deserve or does not have legal basis for granting the CVIA, it will abide by the final determination and implement the appropriate ruling on the matter," PSALM president Nieves Osorio said in a statement yesterday.

The militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) had scored PSALM for giving out a P10-million performance bonus to its employees, allegedly as an incentive for selling the 600-megawatt (MW) Masinloc coal-fired power plant in Zambales.

Osorio, however, said the P6.4-million incentive, and not P10 million as the militant group claimed, was not solely for the Masinloc plant sale.

"Masinloc was not the only key result area for 2004. It was bid out in December 2004 and while it was the largest plant to be bid out, it was only one of six plants that were bid out that year. PSALM had made other significant achievements, which the PSALM board rightfully recognized," she said.

"Privatization has various stages, each composed of sets of activities that require significant amounts of time and effort, regardless of the size of the plant. Hard work has been put in before an asset can be placed in the auction block," she added.

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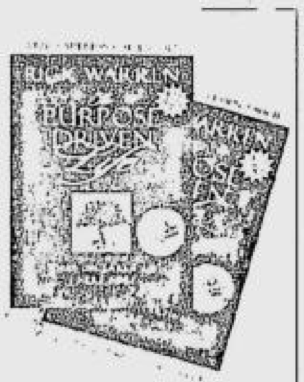

Dr. Rick Warren
author of the best-selling book
PURPOSE - DRIVEN LIFE
"Stewardship of Influence and Affluence".
Tuesday, 25 July 2006, 6:00 PM, Rizal Ballroom, Makati Shangri-La

You will benefit tremendously from this encounter with Dr. Rick Warren as his message will allow you to act. He will challenge us to reach further in life and make a difference in this world. His insight will bring new revelation and opportunity to us for the future. You will definitely leave the Forum changed, and with a new zeal in your soul; ready to impact your world. You have been blessed to be a blessing to others.

Dr. Warren's wife, MS. KAY WARREN, Author, Teacher,and Co-founder of Saddleback Church and Acts of Mercy, will speak before MAP on 24 July 2006, Monday, 12:00 Noon, Grand Ballroom, Hotel Inter-Continental Manila. Her topic will be "HOW TO BE JOYFUL NO MATTER WHAT"

The July 24-25 events are OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. Seats are limited, please call 751-1149 to 52 for reservations.

Fax to the MAP Secretariat via 751-1154

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LIFESTYLE
Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso Chief of Correspondents Pam Pastor
sms feedback: inquirer life name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 386 (Smart) or email us at lifestyle@inquirer.com.ph

Curing a fanatic

[with apologies to Amos Oz]

By Tiffany Limsico
2bU! Correspondent

DATES ARE USUALLY THE FIRST TO GO. Players' names, maybe even scores, all fall away over the years, but fans continue to remember in excruciating detail how their lives revolved around particular games or seasons.

At UAAP games to date, I have been picked out of the crowd to smile for a product spot during a timeout, have auditioned as a courtside reporter (and botched it), have been grounded and almost got fired—all for the love of the game. Yes, I am that kind of fan.

But for every fan who can recall his or her favorite moments is one other person who just doesn't get it. The UAAP college basketball is especially open to derision and ridicule: how these players would not even last a minute in an NBA court, how athletes are given preferential treatment in their respective academes, how predictable the games have become over the years.

This year marks the fifth year I have religiously followed the UAAP college basketball. I used to insist I am not one of those aging alumnae who demonstrate their belligerence against bumbling players and referee calls alike by shouting expletives (as if their opinion counted) and making themselves heard above the incessant buzz of a basketball game.

After all, I am an aberration in the typical profile of a UAAP basketball fan: None of my family is an alumnus of the UAAP schools. Nor can I play basketball.

Defense for my secret shame comes by way of a line in Nick Hornby's ultimate fan testimonial, "Fever Pitch." Although I can't tell Manchester United from Arsenal, I hear myself in this: "So, please be tolerant of those who describe a sporting moment as their best ever. We do not lack imagination, nor have we had sad and barren lives; it is just that real life is paler, duller, and contains less potential for unexpected delirium."

I know someone who bought a General Admission ticket at Araneta Coliseum and every time the crowd would erupt after a three-point shot, she'd jump over one barricaded section to the next. By the time the game was over, she was celebrating victory along with the team on the court.

I've realized there should be no delineation between erstwhile fans and eternal ones. There is, after all, only one kind of fan: he or she who is intensely, sometimes blindly, loyal, hopelessly devoted but also always hopeful.

Being a fan means being an eternal optimist, and I believe the best fans are those rooting for not-so-stellar teams, the ones that are consistently inconsistent, who show surprising moments of brilliance amid the drudgery of their games.

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Much like life. We don't stick around because it's always a walk in the park. It's the sudden reprieves that diminish the daily brick-work.

Possibility of transcendence

Stephen Dunn is one of my favorite poets, in part because he lends some credibility to this obsession. Aside from being a former professional basketball player, he is also a Pulitzer Prize-winning poet. In his essay, "Basketball and Poetry: The Two Riches," he writes, "Perhaps basketball and poetry have just a few things in common, but the most important is the possibility of transcendence."

Basketball—or any sporting event, for that matter—gives the upstart a chance to become a hero overnight, for a team plagued by endless drought to be blessed by sudden championship rain.

Every fan will tell you that any sporting event is about being part of something larger than one's self. Fan is also "fanaticus," meaning "pertaining to a temple, inspired by a god." Yes, faith and fanaticism, whether religious or not, have always been good bedfellows.

Once, after one excruciating loss, I bumped into an old college acquaintance. It was by sharing our mutual compulsion to sit in a corner and mope about the game that I felt I finally connected with him.

Fandom is always in the collective. It's always we fans, not that fan or those crazy fans. And basketball is a team sport. We fans need every cheer, every clap and yell we can get.

At season's end each year, I am convinced that I have had it with college basketball. I tell myself that this is the last year I'd be watching the UAAP games. Fewer friends want to accompany me every year, and my parents remind me that I may just be getting too old for this.

But resistance is futile when I remain addicted to the exhilaration of a near-perfect UAAP victory, to the highest highs and lowest lows of a two-hour span, to how possibilities are enlarged in every game.

Not just for the teams, but for every fan who lives in the moment.

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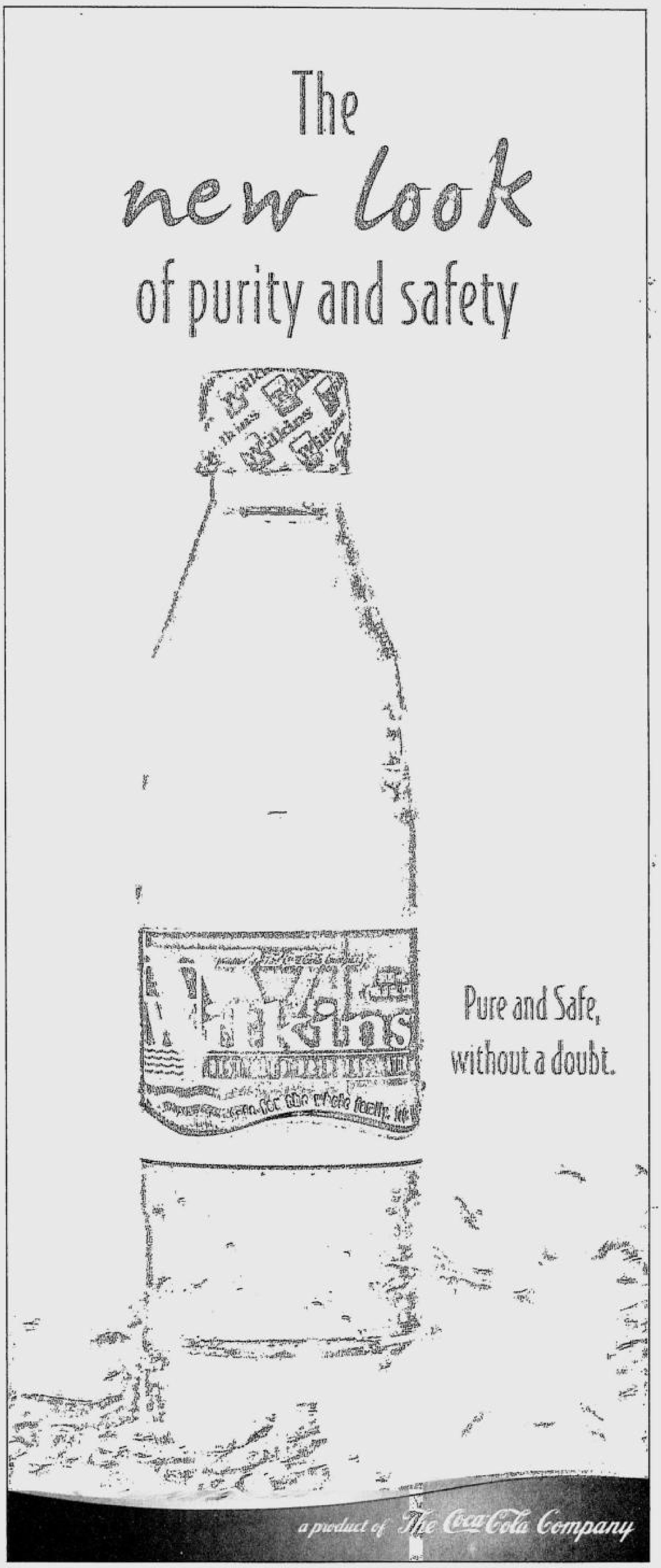
2bU! is letting you in on the "Rock Star: Supernova" craze! Unleash your inner rock star and get a chance to win exclusive premium items from Star World's top-rating reality TV show.

Send in your most recent photo at a rockin' gig and tell us in five sentences or less: "What makes your life rock?" All entries must be e-mailed to rockstar_2bu@yahoo.com—just don't forget to include all the juicy details (date, place, gig/band).

Each week, three rocked out readers will win cool prizes from "Rock Star: Supernova" and have their winning entries published in upcoming 2bU! issues. So go ahead and rock our world, you know you want to!

"Rock Star: Supernova" airs live, exclusively on Star World every Tuesdays (8:30 a.m.) and Wednesdays (8 a.m.), with primetime broadcasts at 8 p.m. on the same day.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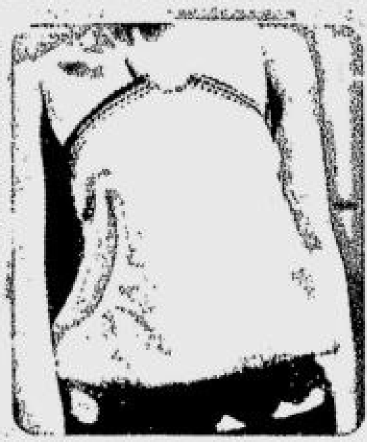
SHRUG it off. After Eight, P1,490

BLOUSE from Souk, P2,560


WHITE halter from Wildflower, P695

SHIRT with flower cutouts from Free People, P2,175

RUFFLED wrap-around from Faith Hope Love, P1,090

PINK bolero from Dressing Roo
P1,295

SEVEN Dials' poncho, P995

TOP from Purr Australia, P1,760

SEVEN Dials' bolero, P795

SEVEN Dials' embellished skirt, P1,295

STRIPED skirt from Souk, P3,000

SOMETHING fishy. Skirt from Marni's Room/Souk, P1,650

[illegible] the ramp

No mo
in sear

By Pam Pastor
Photos by Romy Homillada

IT'S A RAMP LIKE NO other. At Crossings Department Store's The Ramp, fashion fans don't get to watch models strut by in beautiful clothes, they get to put together outfits for themselves.

Its current lineup of brands is an eclectic mix—local and foreign, western and oriental, casual and formal, affordable and, well, a little less affordable.

The variety is good, because the racks offer different finds for every person, every taste and occasion.

There's Running Bare from Australia, which offers workout and yoga clothes. There's Purr, again from Australia, which gives casual clothes a sexy twist. There's (X)SML from Indonesia, which is feminine and flirty. There's After Eight—a line of breathtakingly beautiful pieces (with an extra dose of drama) from Debbie Co. There's Hywell Angeles' Seven Dials which we love for the unique patterns, exotic prints, body-friendly cuts and value for money. There's Richie Ortega's United Pop, which is fun and funky. For office wear with an edge, there's Tina Silva-Navarro's Rocco. The beloved Souk has also found another home at The Ramp.

Other brands in the area include Free People, Buffalo, Wildflower, Dressing Room and CMGlam.

Faith Hope and Love, Crossings' in-house brand which is situated just behind The Ramp, also offers affordable fashion. Salsa Trends, as the name suggests, is sexy and colorful.

Photo shoots have two effects on the Fashion Freaks. Sometimes, being surrounded by so many clothes, accessories and shoes makes us feel like we're all shopped out. Other times, shoots ignite our desire to buy—and that's exactly what happened at The Ramp. We wanted to buy everything.

That's a pretty good sign, we think.

The Ramp is at Crossings Department Store in Edsa. Visit www.crossings.com.ph.

Do you want the Fashion Freaks to visit your store or check out your wares? E-mail us at thefashionfreaks@yahoo.com

DRESS from Faith Hope Love, P

EYELET dress from United Pop, P6,145

TOP-SLASH-DRESS from Seven Dials, P995

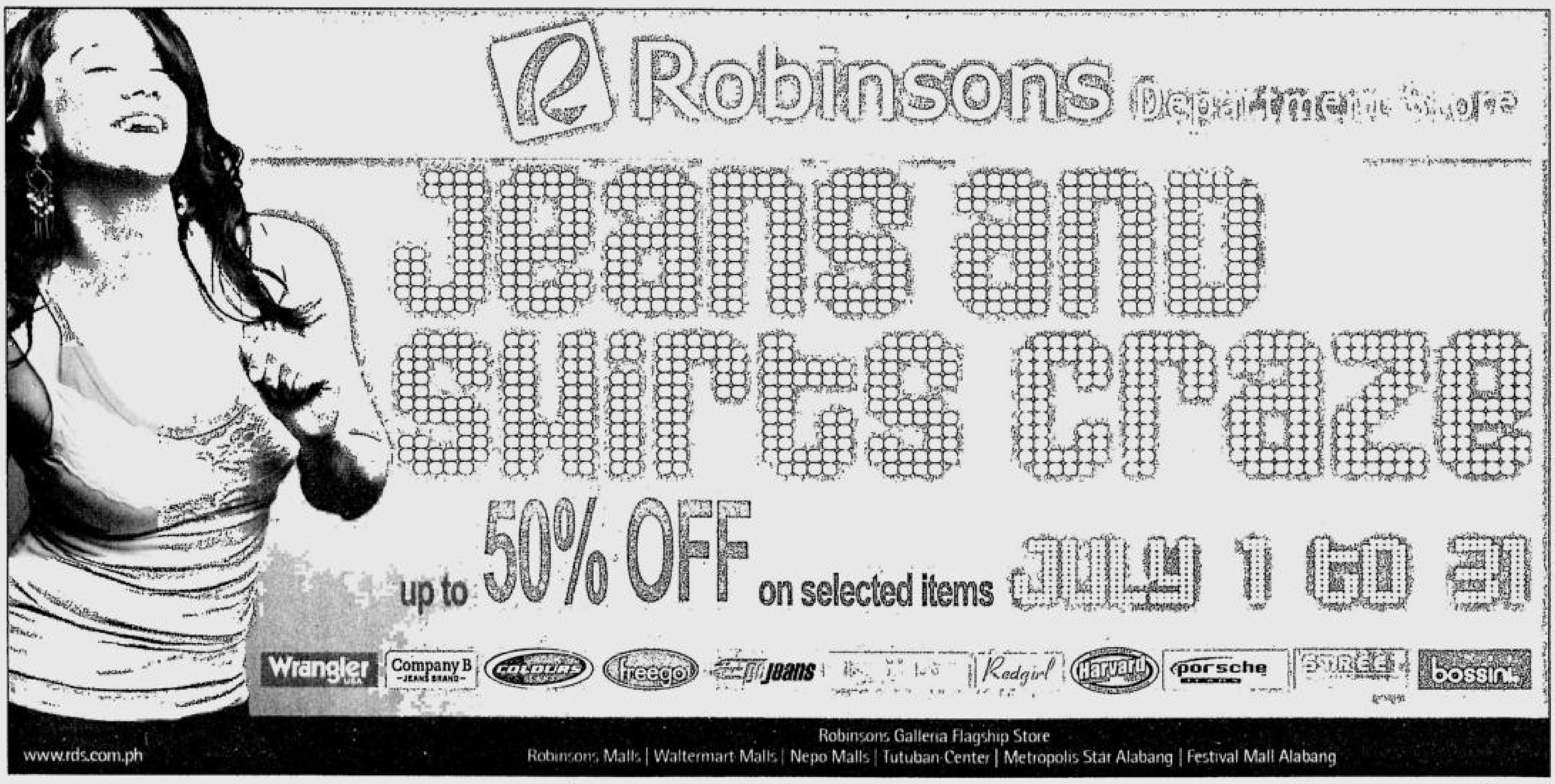
AFTER Eight dress, P3,490

FLORAL dress from Souk, P1,820

SHOE-PRINT dress from After Eight, P2,590

PONCHO top from Salsa Trends, P790

GREEN tunic from United Pop, P1,980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n, RED tank from Running Bare, P2,120

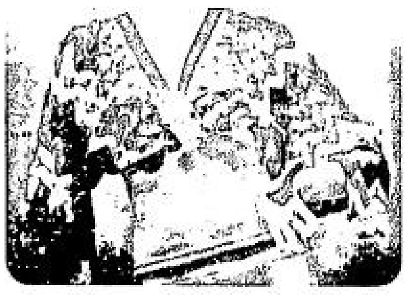
dels here, just real people
ch of beautiful clothes

550 PANTS from Running Bare, P3,620

BROWN shorts from Faith Hope Love, P675

BEAUTIFUL top from After Eight, P2,790

CROPPED jacket from Rocco, P780



WILD colors from Wildflower, P829

Raffle promo winner

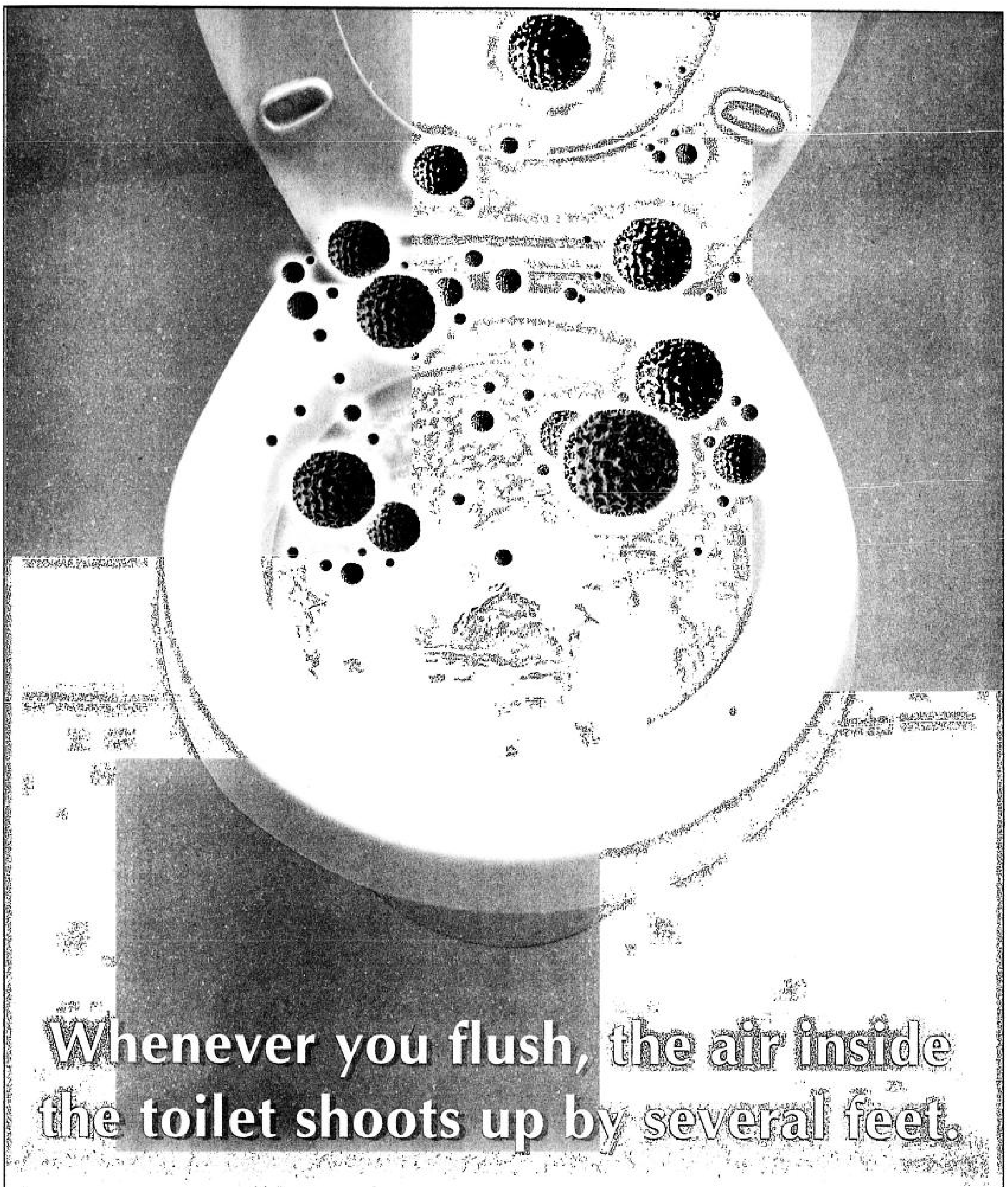
NICOLAS VERGARA OF NEgros Oriental is the grand prize winner of Max Factor's "'Tis the Season to be Dazzling" raffle promo, an exclusive tie-up with Watson's.

Vergara won a P100,000 worth of gift certificates for a shopping spree at Watson's and SM Department Stores.

Participants qualified by buying P1,000 worth of Max Factor cosmetics including Lash Lift Mascara, Colour Perfection Lipstick, Colour Adapt Pressed Powder and Silk Gloss Sheer Frost. They also had a chance to win instant Max Factor items in the Pick-a-Prize game.

Max Factor cosmetics are available at all leading department stores nationwide and is exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corporation.

(FROM LEFT) Max Factor "'Tis the Season to be Dazzling" promo winner Nicolas Vergara, sister Ria Tungpalan, Rustan Marketing Corp. PR manager Eliza Gotico and Max Factor brand manager Erica Espiritu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Per DTI Permit No. 1804 Series of 2006

VISA

Shot-happy and click-ready camera

The very portable Sony DSC-W50 lives up to its slogan, 'Avoid taking blurry pictures'

By Gabriel H. Mercado
2bU! Contributor

WHO WOULDN'T WANT something fun, functional, pretty to look at and boasting some of the highest tech all in one device?

These were the questions I couldn't help ask while I used the Sony DSC-W50 for a full week, and, boy, did I use it a lot. Weighing at only 4.7 oz, approximately the weight of a pack of cards and about slightly larger than that, I slipped it on one of those sturdy necklaces press people get a lot of in trade shows, and I had an instant memory machine wrapped around my neck, ready for taking pictures whenever anything even remotely interesting comes up.

And this is where its features set in, specifically how quickly it wakes up from completely off to ready-to-shoot. At the flick of the lever on top, I approximate around 1.5 to two seconds before you have it ready to fire. Around the same time as well, for you to get ready yourself, by finding a good area and making sure you've got everything focused and inside your shot.

The DSC-W50 slogan on Sonystyle.com is "Avoid taking blurry pictures," highlighting its now famous Carl Zeiss Vario-Tessar lens. In the heat of a moment, while you're trying to get everybody into a shot, or from the passenger seat of a car, or when a baby its first step, you've no time to fiddle with settings; you can only hope that whatever you take a snapshot of comes out well.

SONY
Cyber-shot
2.8-5.2/6.3-18.9

SONY DSC-W50

Use it for what it's for

It's important to note, however, that while the DSC-W50 is good at certain tasks, it's not perfect for all. The DSC-W50 is Sony's 6.0 megapixel entry into the point-and-shoot category, which distinguishes itself by being very easy to use and portable, among others.

These are the type of cameras specifically for the fashion and lifestyle category. The ones most likely found around the necks or in the bag of a person who likes to take shots of events and people, usually indoors or in low light, and usually not farther than 10 ft or so from the one taking the shot.

So if you like to party and attend events, take pictures of people like friends and family, or even the odd item like a bag, dress or something you want to buy or show your friends while at the mall, then the DSC-W50 is perfect. You can whip it out quickly and quietly, and not create too much of a fuss as you capture the moment. You can then just as quickly turn it off while slipping it into your bag or pocket without missing a beat, continuing your conversation with your partner as you do.

At home, the installed software will automatically recognize the DSC-W50 once connected via USB, and will download the pictures for you. You can also edit it a bit. Once ready, it can be quickly e-mailed to friends, or uploaded to an online gallery and pasted on your blog. It's so quick and easy that you won't even know high technology is working for you, which is just the way it's supposed to be.

If, however, you need to take many pictures outdoors, with the subject moving quickly, at a great distance, and too large, then you would need to look at other Sony Digicam products. Remember that camera manufacturers like Sony do not necessarily equate higher-end models with better quality pictures. Like many other technology products, it's a matter of matching the intended use with the gadget at hand, and it's no less different with digicams.

A-camera

The Sony DSC-W50 had a few flimsy plastic parts, namely the button for taking a shot and the cover of the battery, which if you're not careful, may come off if you pull it out of a bag too quickly. Otherwise, it offers the quality and ease of use that you've come to expect from Sony, especially with how easy it is to change settings midstream, which is crucial when you need to take "in the moment" snapshots.

The DSC-W50 is available in silver, but I recommend the luscious black like the one lent to me, which looks very sophisticated and will also work with anything you wear. I give this one an A overall—yet another sure winner from Sony, providing fun, easy use for many years to come like many of its products.

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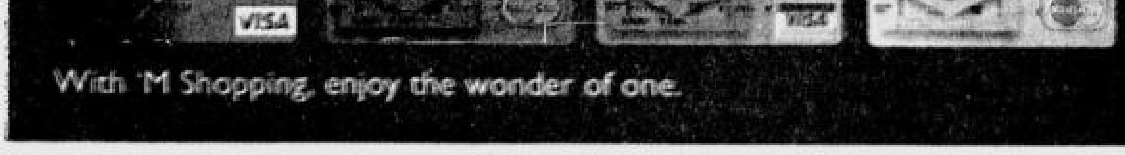

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